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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

VICTOR ALFIERI;

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

Translated from the Italian.

Plerique suam ipsi vitam narrare, fiduciam potius morum, quam arrogantiam, arbitrati sunt.

TACITUS—*Life of Agricola.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN, CONDUIT-STREET, NEW BOND-STREET.

1810.

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INTRODUCTION.

SELF-LOVE is unquestionably the chief motive which leads any one to speak, and more especially to write respecting himself. I shall not, therefore, offer to my readers any weak apologies or false and unsatisfactory reasons for having written these memoirs, since they would afford a bad specimen of my future veracity. I frankly acknowledge, that among all the different sentiments which induced me to become my own biographer, the most powerful was self-love. Nature has implanted this feeling, in a greater or less degree, in the breast of every individual; she has been lavish of it to authors, and particularly to poets, or those who term themselves such. This precious gift is the principal motive of all the great actions of man, when he unites to a knowledge of his own powers, an enlightened enthusiasm for the sublime and beautiful, which are in fact only one and the same thing.

Without dwelling longer on these general reasons, I shall proceed to notice those in particular which induced me to compose these memoirs; and afterwards point out the rules I prescribed to myself in the execution of this task.

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Even, at present, my literary productions are pretty voluminous. Hence, it is not unnatura to suppose, that a few individuals, either among my cotemporaries or their descendants, to whom my productions may have afforded some degree of pleasure, will be anxious to know something of my character. This opinion cannot, I flatter myself, be deemed presumptuous, since I daily observe the lives of authors read with avidity, who are perhaps less known from the merit than the number of their works: besides, if no other reason existed, it is certain, as soon as I should be no more, some bookseller, in order to enhance his gains on a new edition of my works, would prefix to it a life of the author. This life would probably be written by some one who was completely ignorant of the events which compose it, and who drew the materials from doubtful or partial sources. In short, it could never be equally authentic as one from my own pen, since a writer, in the pay of a publisher, usually panegyrises the author; both flattering themselves, by this means, to ensure a greater sale for his works. In order, therefore, to render this biographical sketch more accurate, and as impartial as any which could be written after my death, I, who was never known to forfeit my promise, here covenant with myself and my readers, to free myself, as much as it is in the power of man to do, from the mist of passion and prejudice, in the delineation of my own character.

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I have entered into this engagement, because, on the most rigorous scrutiny of my own character, I have found, or believe I have found, the good preponderate over the evil. Besides, if I possess not the courage, or the indiscretion, to speak of myself as I deserve, I shall, at least, not have the baseness to gloss over my faults by advancing an untruth. As to the method which I propose to follow, in order to spare, or, at least, to abridge the trouble of the reader, by leaving him at liberty to pass over those years of my life which may appear to him the least interesting, it is my intention to divide this work into five epochs, corresponding with the five ages of man—*infancy*, *adolescence*, *youth*, *manhood*, and *old age*: but from the manner in which I have written the three first parts, and more than a half of the fourth, I cannot flatter myself with being able to preserve that brevity, which I have been always solicitous to attain in my works, and which would be more particularly necessary and praise-worthy when speaking of myself.

I am, moreover, afraid that in the fifth part, should I ever reach that period, I may fall into that garrulity, which is the inseparable concomitant of imbecile old age. If then, in consequence of this declension of my faculties, I should become tedious and diffuse, I entreat, before hand, that the reader may forgive this fault, and throw aside the last part without perusing it.

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When I say that I cannot flatter myself with being so concise as I could wish, even in the four first periods, I do not certainly mean to extend them to a ridiculous length, by the detail of a thousand minute circumstances. I shall only relate those which, in my opinion, may contribute to the knowledge of man in general, whose nature we can best understand by studying ourselves.

It is not my intention to speak of any individual whose history is not, in some way or other, connected with my own. I profess only to write facts which have a relation to myself, and not those in which others are concerned. I shall avoid naming any person, and if I recal the remembrance of a few, it will only be in regard to things which are either indifferent or praiseworthy. The object of this work relates chiefly to the study of man in general. And of what man can any one speak so correctly as of himself? What other can he study more easily, know more intimately, or estimate with greater accuracy—having for so many years penetrated into his most secret thoughts?

As to the style of these Memoirs, dictated by the heart and not the head, I have undeviatingly throughout employed that spontaneous and natural simplicity, which, in my opinion, is best suited to a subject of this nature.

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MEMOIRS

OF

VICTOR ALFIERI.

First Epoch.

INFANCY,

INCLUDING NINE YEARS OF MY LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Birth and Parentage.

I was born in the city of Asti, in Piedmont, on the 17th of January, 1749, of noble, wealthy, and respectable parents. I particularly mention these three circumstances, because I regard them as extremely fortunate, for the following reasons: my noble birth enabled me, without incurring the charge of envy or meanness, to despise

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those nobles who were distinguished only by their origin, and to unveil their follies, their abuses, and crimes, while at the same time its influence was sufficiently powerful to prevent me sullying the dignity of the art I professed. The affluence of my circumstances enabled me to dedicate my labours to the interests of truth; and the probity of my parents prevented me from blushing that I had been born a gentleman. If any one of these circumstances had been wanting, my different works must necessarily have suffered by it, and I myself might even perhaps have been either a worse philosopher, or a less respectable man.

The name of my father was Anthony Alfieri; that of my mother Monica Maillard de Tournon. She was of Savoyard origin, as her barbarous sirnames sufficiently indicate, though her family had been long settled at Turin. My father, who had been bred to no profession, was a man of strict morals, and wholly devoid of ambition, as I have been informed by those who were most intimately acquainted with him.

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Possessing a fortune adequate to his rank in life, gentle in his manners, and moderate in all his desires, his days glided happily on. When above the age of fifty, he became enamoured of my mother, whom he made his wife; she was still very young, and the widow of the Marquis of Cacherano, a nobleman of Asti. A daughter, whose birth preceded mine by two years, rendered my father more than ever anxious for a son; hence my entrance into the world was hailed with every demonstration of joy. I know not, whether he merely rejoiced at this event, as most aged men are apt to do under similar circumstances, or whether his satisfaction arose from his extreme anxiety to perpetuate his name and family to future generations. It probably proceeded from a combination of both these causes. Be this, however, as it may, I was sent to nurse in the village of Rovigliasco, two miles from Asti, where he came to see me almost every day on foot, being a man wholly destitute of ostentation, and extremely simple in his manners. He was, at this period, above sixty years

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of age, though still strong and robust; but, during one of his daily excursions, in which he paid no attention to the state of the weather, he so overheated himself, that he was seized with an inflammation in his lungs, which in a few days conducted him to the tomb.

I had not then completed my first year. My mother was pregnant with another boy, who died in his infancy, so that there only remained to her a boy and girl of my father's, and two daughters and a son by her first husband, the Marquis of Cacherano. My mother, though a widow for the second time, being still young, espoused as a third husband the Chevalier Hyacinth Alfieri de Magliano, sprung from a different branch of a family bearing the same name as my own. The chevalier, by the death of his eldest brother, who left no issue, became heir to all his immense possessions. With this husband, who was nearly about her own age, of a prepossessing figure, and noble and dignified manners, my amiable mother enjoyed the most perfect happiness.

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When writing these memoirs, at the age of forty-one, this union still exists. For more than thirty-seven years, this respectable couple have exhibited a model of every domestic virtue; they are beloved, respected, and admired by all their countrymen, particularly my mother, who, animated by a zealous and heroic piety, entirely devotes herself to the relief of the indigent and unfortunate.

During this period she successively lost her eldest son and daughter, the fruit of her first marriage, as well as the two boys whom she had by her third husband, so that in her old age I am the only one of her sons who survives. The fatality of my destiny compels me to reside at a distance from her, a circumstance which has proved to me a source of much uneasiness, and to which no consideration would have tempted me to submit, had I not been well assured that she found in the energy of her character, and in true piety, an ample compensation for the loss of her children. I trust I may be pardoned this digression in favour of the best of mothers.

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CHAPTER II.

Recollections of Infancy.

I RETAIN no recollection of the occurrences which took place during my boyish days, except that a paternal uncle, when I was only three or four years of age, placed me upon an old chest, and while caressing me, gave me some excellent sweetmeats. I remember little more respecting him, than the figure of the square shoes which he usually wore. Several years after his death, the sight of a pair of old-fashioned boots, with similar toes, suddenly recalled to my mind the sensations I had experienced on receiving the caresses and sweetmeats from my uncle, whom I never saw after I acquired the use of reason; the words, the manners, of the worthy old man, even the very taste of the sweetmeats, vividly recurred to my imagination. I have

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related this infantile anecdote, as it cannot be wholly useless to the individual who wishes to investigate the mechanism of our ideas, and the relations which subsist between thoughts and sensations.

When about five years of age, I was reduced to the last extremity by a violent dysentery. It seems to me as if I still retained in my mind a certain recollection of my torments. I knew not then what death was, yet I anxiously looked forward to it as the termination of my sufferings. I had heard it said, when my youngest brother died, that he would become a little angel.

Notwithstanding all my efforts to recal my primitive ideas, or the sensations I had felt previous to my sixth year, I can only remember these two. After the nuptials of my mother, my sister Julia and myself left our paternal mansion, and accompanied her to the house of her husband, who proved more than a father to us, during the time we remained under his roof.

My mother's eldest son and daughter were successively sent to Turin; the one to the college of Jesuits, and the other to a

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convent. Shortly after my sister Julia was placed in a convent at Asti. I perfectly remember this little domestic event, as my faculties began about that period to unfold themselves. I still recollect the grief I experienced, and the tears I shed, on this separation, though we were for some time permitted to see each other daily. Upon reviewing the sensations which I then experienced, I found they were similar to those I afterwards felt, when, in the heyday of youth, I was compelled to relinquish the society of any beloved female, or sincere friends, to whom I was ardently attached; for I have been fortunate enough, during my progress through life, to possess three or four of the latter—a happiness denied to many others, perhaps far better deserving of it than myself. The recollection of the grief I suffered, on the separation from my sister, has afforded me a convincing proof that all the affections of man, however different they may appear, originate from the same principle.

After the departure of the other children, a worthy priest, named Ivaldi, was

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taken into the family, as my preceptor. From him I learned writing, and the four first rules of arithmetic; he also taught me to read Cornelius Nepos, as well as Phædrus's fables: but the good father Ivaldi was himself exceedingly ignorant, as I afterwards discovered; and if I had remained under his tuition after my ninth year, my learning must necessarily have continued stationary. My parents themselves were wholly destitute of literary acquirements, and I have frequently heard them repeat the common-place maxim of those days, *that a nobleman had no occasion to be a doctor.*

I had, however, a natural inclination for study, especially since the departure of my sister; besides, the perfect solitude in which I lived with my tutor tended to generate a disposition to melancholy, and a habit of abstraction.

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CHAPTER III.

First Indications of an ardent Character.

I must here mention a singular circumstance concerning the development of my amatory feelings. From the period of my sister's departure, I had become much more melancholy and serious than usual. My visits to this beloved sister became gradually less frequent, because, in order that I might bestow an undivided attention on my studies, I only had permission to visit her on certain holidays and festivals. I experienced a species of consolation in my solitude, from the habit I had acquired of daily frequenting a Carmelite church adjoining our house, from listening to the music, observing the officiating monks, from attending to the ceremonies of high mass, the processions,

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and similar spectacles. In a few months I ceased to think so often of my sister, and in the end her image scarcely ever occurred to my mind; so much was I occupied by attending morning and evening at the Carmelites. To this attendance I was induced by the following reason. From the period when my sister was sent to the convent, I had never beheld a youthful countenance, except those of the Carmelite novices, most of whom were about fourteen or sixteen years of age, and who assisted at the different festivals, habited in the white robes of their order. Their features, which partook of the feminine character, made on my tender and artless heart the same impression as those of my sister, and I felt the same desire to again behold them. This sentiment, modified in so many different ways, was however equivalent to love. When reflecting on it, several years afterwards, I became more fully convinced of this truth; for at the time I was wholly unacquainted with the true nature of my own feelings, I merely obeyed the pure

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impulse of nature. So ardent did my innocent attachment to these novices become, that I unceasingly thought on them and their functions. Sometimes my imagination represented them to me holding their wax tapers in their hands, performing the service with a devout and angelic air, sometimes burning incense at the foot of the altar. Wholly absorbed by these images, I neglected my studies; all employment was irksome to me, and I became disgusted with society. Being one day left alone by my preceptor, I sought in my Latin and Italian dictionaries for the word *Monk*; I immediately cancelled it, and wrote that of *Father* in its stead; thus conceiving, I knew not why, that I was ennobling the young monks whom I saw every day, but with whom I had never conversed, and respecting whom I could not define my own sentiments. The reason which induced me to make this alteration was, having often heard the term *Monk* pronounced with a sort of contempt, and the word *Father* with veneration and affection. I carefully concealed from my

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preceptor those rude corrections awkwardly made with a pen. He neither perceived nor appeared to suspect it; such an idea could never enter his mind. Whoever reflects on this trifling action, and endeavours to trace in it the germ of human passions, will not perhaps conceive it so puerile and ridiculous as it may at first sight appear.

These singular effects, proceeding from a sentiment wholly unknown to myself, but yet acting so powerfully on my imagination, gave rise to that melancholy which became gradually a predominant trait of my character, and ultimately influenced all the other qualities of my mind.

When about seven or eight years of age, finding myself in one of these melancholy humours, perhaps occasioned by the weak state of my health, after having seen my preceptor and attendant go out, I darted from my little cabinet, which was level with the ground, and proceeded to a second court, covered with a profusion of plants, which I immediately began to tear up by handfuls, and devour with the

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greatest avidity, notwithstanding their pungent and bitter taste. I had heard hemlock mentioned as being a herb fatal to the life of man; and though I wished not to die, nor indeed scarcely knew what death was, nevertheless, led away by a sort of natural instinct, mingled with some secret and undefined grief, I eagerly devoured the plants which fell in my way, under the supposition that I had discovered hemlock; but disgusted with their nauseous and bitter taste, and finding myself sick at stomach, I went into a garden adjoining the house, without being seen by any one, and disgorged what I had swallowed. Returning to my chamber, I remained alone, without uttering a word, experiencing a slight cholic and pains in my stomach. On my preceptor's return, he did not remark my uneasiness, and I was silent on the subject. Shortly after I was summoned to dinner, and my mother, on perceiving my eyes swollen and inflamed as they usually are after violent retching, insisted on knowing what had happened. While she continued to importune me, the

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cholic pains increased so much that I could not eat, nevertheless I still obstinately remained silent, and made the greatest efforts to conceal my sufferings. On attentively observing me for some time, she became more and more convinced that I really laboured under some severe ailment, and at the same time noticing the greenish colour of my lips, which I had forgotten to wash, she became terrified, and hastily approaching me, entreated with so much earnestness that I would impart to her the cause of my distress, that, overcome by terror and grief, I burst into tears, and avowed the truth. Some simple remedies were administered, and I suffered no injurious consequences from my folly, except a few days seclusion in my chamber, by way of punishment, which afforded me an opportunity of brooding over my melancholy ideas.

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CHAPTER IV.

The Development of my Character indicated by several trifling Occurrences.

I MUST now give a sketch of the character which I displayed at the period when reason began to dawn on my infant mind. Taciturn and calm, petulant and talkative by turns, my spirits were always in extremes; resisting force, but submissive to the voice of friendship. I was more restrained by the dread of being reprimanded, than by any other consideration; in short, though excessively timid, I was inflexible when any one attempted to overcome me by open force.

The better to account to my readers and myself for these primitive qualities, which nature had imprinted on my mind, among other little anecdotes of my childhood, I

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shall relate two or three which I perfectly remember, and which clearly depict my character. Of all the punishments at any time inflicted on me, that which affected me with the most violent grief was being sent to mass, with a net on my head in the form of a night-cap, and which almost entirely concealed my hair. The first time I underwent this penance, on what occasion I do not now recollect, my preceptor dragged me by the hand to the Carmalite church already mentioned, which was never much frequented, and which at this time contained only about forty persons. This punishment afflicted me so much, that for about three months my behaviour was irreprehensible. This effect appears to have been chiefly produced by the two following causes: I supposed that all eyes must necessarily be fixed on the fatal night-cap, and that it rendered me extremely ugly and deformed; in short, that every one who beheld me punished in this terrible manner, would regard me as the worst of culprits. But what above all pierced me to the heart, was the dread of being ob-

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served in such a situation by my revered novices. My readers will behold in these traits of my infantile feeling, a picture of themselves, and of human beings of every age, since men may in some measure through life be regarded as children.

The salutary effect produced on me by this punishment gave so much satisfaction to my preceptor and my parents, that on the least appearance of a fault I was threatened with the detested night-cap, at the sight of which I always trembled, and promptly returned to my duty. Having however one day committed a trifling fault, to excuse which I told my mother a falsehood, this so much dreaded punishment was again to be inflicted on me; added to which, I was told, that in place of being conducted to the deserted Carmelite church, I should be taken to that of Saint Martin's, which stood at a considerable distance from our house, in the centre of the city, and was always crowded at noon with the indolent votaries of fashion. Alas! what horror did I not experience! I entreated, I wept, I was in despair, but all in

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vain. What a night I passed! I conceived it would be the last of my life; I never closed my eyes. Amid all the misfortunes I have experienced in my progress through life, I do not recollect to have spent one more dreadful. The hour at length arrived: covered with the dreadful night-cap, weeping, howling, I set out, dragged by my preceptor, and pushed forward by the domestic. In this manner I traversed two or three streets, without encountering a living being; but as soon as we entered the more frequented parts of the city near to the church, I suddenly ceased to weep or cry, and instead of requiring to be dragged forward, I walked peaceably, and at a rapid pace, close by the side of Father Ivaldi, in the hope of partly screening myself from notice under the large sleeve of his cloak, and to which my little figure hardly reached. I arrived in the middle of the church, led by the hand like one who was blind; for in fact, having shut my eyes the moment I set my foot on the threshold, I never opened them till I was forced to kneel in my place in order to hear the mass,

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and even then I lowered them, so as not to distinguish any of the congregation. On leaving the church, I returned home in the same manner, despair in my heart, believing myself for ever dishonoured. During the remainder of the day, I neither ate, spoke, studied, nor even wept; in fact, my grief was so violent that I fell sick, and continued indisposed for several days, which so terrified my affectionate mother, that I was never again subjected to a similar punishment; while, on my part, I carefully avoided being guilty of another falsehood. I know not whether it is imputable to the happy effect of the night-cap, that I have been through life the most candid, and least given to deceit of any individual with whom I am acquainted. I shall here mention another little anecdote:—My maternal aunt, a lady of distinction at Turin, and the widow of one of the greatest noblemen of the court, arrived on a visit at Asti, surrounded with all that pomp and splendor which make such a powerful impression on the minds of children. She remained a few days with my mother, but though she lavish-

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ed on me caresses, unreasonable as it may appear, I never could become familiar with her. Before her departure, she inquired what would please me, and I should have it. But shame, timidity, and irresolution combined with obstinacy, withheld me from making any reply except the monosyllable nothing; and though all those by whom I was surrounded reiterated the question in twenty different ways, in order to draw from me a more polite answer, yet they could only gain by their importunity the repetition of the same eternal nothing. For some time this word was uttered with vivacity, and in a voice trembling with irritation, but at length it was accompanied with tears and interrupted by sobs. I was dismissed from their presence, as I so well merited, and shut up in my chamber, where I could repeat at my ease my favourite nothing, while in the meantime my aunt departed. But though I had thus obstinately refused her gifts, I had several days before stolen from one of her trunks, which had been accidentally left open, a fan, which I concealed in my bed, and which was discover-

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ed some time afterwards. On being questioned respecting it, I truly said, that I intended to present it to my sister; a severe chastisement followed this robbery. But although a thief is certainly worse than a liar, I was neither threatened nor punished with the night-cap, so much more terrified was my mother to see me fall sick of grief, than alarmed lest I should become a little knave. Dishonesty is a crime not much to be feared, nor is it difficult to eradicate among those who are not driven to it through necessity. Respect for the property of others quickly takes root, and grows up among individuals who possess wealth of their own.

I shall here only mention another anecdote respecting my first confession, when I was between seven and eight years of age:

My preceptor prepared me for this ceremony, by suggesting all the various crimes of which he conceived I might have been guilty, many of which I knew not even by name. Having undergone this precious examination by Ivaldi, a day was fixed on which I was to make my little confession

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at the feet of Father Ange, a Carmelite priest, who was also the confessor of my mother. When I prostrated myself before him, I remained silent, so great was the grief and repugnance I felt at being forced to reveal my secrets, my actions, and my thoughts, to one whom I scarcely knew. I believe that the father himself suggested my confession, though he declared himself satisfied, and bestowed on me absolution; at the same time enjoining me as a penance, to throw myself before sitting down to dinner at the feet of my mother, and publicly soliciting her pardon for all my past faults. This penance was to me extremely disagreeable, not that I felt the slightest repugnance to ask pardon of my mother; but to kneel in presence of all those who might be present, was to me an insupportable punishment. When I entered the dining-room on my return home, where I found a large company already assembled, it seemed to me as if all eyes were fixed on me, and I threw down mine. Irresolute, confused, and immovable, I durst not approach

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the table where they were taking their places, though I suspected not that any one was acquainted with the penance I had been enjoined. Assuming therefore a little courage, I advanced to seat myself among the others, when my mother regarding me with a stern aspect, inquired if I had really a right to place myself at table; if I had fulfilled my duty; and if, in short, I had nothing wherewith to reproach myself. Each of these questions went like a dagger to my heart; my mournful aspect spoke with sufficient plainness, for I was unable to articulate a single word. There were no means, however, to make me execute my penance, or even declare what it was, as my mother on her side was unwilling to commit my unfaithful confessor; so that the affair ended in this, that she lost her obeisance and I my dinner, and perhaps also the absolution given to me by Father Ange on such a hard condition. At that period I had not however sagacity to discover that the father had agreed with my mother what penance it would be proper to

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impose on me. But the feelings of my heart supplied the place of judgment; I conceived from that period a great hatred towards the monk, and displayed very little inclination to again approach the confessional, though he never again attempted to enjoin me any public penances.

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CHAPTER V.

Last Anecdote of my Infancy.

My eldest brother, the Marquis Cacherano, who for some years had pursued his studies in the College of the Jesuits at Turin, came to spend the vacation at Asti. He was then about fourteen, and I myself nearly eight years of age; his presence afforded me at the same time a subject of pleasure and chagrin. Not being children of the same father, he was in a great measure a stranger to me, and I felt not for him any real friendship. We often sported together, and I believe habit might have produced in my mind some affection towards him; but he was older than me, had more liberty, possessed more money, and received more attention from his parents. He had likewise seen more of the world, during his stay at Turin, could con-

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strue Virgil—and what was I yet acquainted with? He possessed many other little advantages over me, and, for the first time, envy began to spring up in my mind.

It was not, however, a base passion, because it did not lead me to hate the individual, but only ardently to desire that I might possess the same advantages, without wishing to deprive him of them. Such is the distinction I would make between the two species of envy; that which takes root in base minds displays itself in hatred, against every one possessed of the smallest superiority, and in a desire to injure and deprive them, even of what cannot benefit themselves; the other, which emanates from generous souls, is evinced under the name of emulation, by an ardent longing to obtain the same superiority in an equal or even a greater degree than others. Thus we see how imperceptible is the line which separates the germ of our virtues and vices.

My brother and I passed our time sometimes in sporting together, in wrestling, and in various other exercises. In this way

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the summer glided on more joyously with me than usual, as I had always before been the only child in the house, and nothing is more wearisome to the youthful mind than perfect solitude. One day, among others, which was excessively hot, when the rest of the family retired after dinner to take a nap, we amused ourselves with performing the Prussian exercise, which my brother had previously taught me. On making a half turn to the right when marching, I fell, and struck my head against one of the andirons, which had been left by mistake in the chimney since the preceding winter. The ornamental knobs which are usually adapted to the point in front of the chimney had been broken off; it was on one of the sharp points that I wounded myself, about a finger-breadth above the left eyebrow. The scar of this wound, which was large and deep, is still visible, and will remain so through life; I sprung up without assistance, and immediately called out to my brother to say nothing, as at the time I was not sensible I had received any injury; and was besides keenly alive to the

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shame of having displayed so little dexterity in the performance of my exercise; but I was too late, for my brother had already flown to awaken my preceptor. The noise had even reached my mother, and the whole house was in an uproar. In the mean time I remained perfectly quiet, till finding something warm flowing down my visage, I put up my hand, and on perceiving it was blood I began to cry bitterly. It was merely, however, through terror, for I perfectly recollect that I experienced no pain till the surgeon began to examine and dress the wound. Several weeks elapsed before it was completely healed, and for a few days I was wholly confined to my chamber, as the swelling and inflammation were so excessive as to threaten the loss of my eye.

During my convalescence, and before the bandages were thrown aside, I frequently attended the Carmalite church with the greatest pleasure, though these dressings disfigured me much more than the net night-cap, which was of a green colour, neatly made, and altogether similar to those

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worn for ornament by the petits-maitres of Andalusia. When travelling afterwards in Spain, I myself adopted this fashion. I felt not then the least repugnance to appear in public with all my surgical dressings, either because the idea of the danger I had run flattered my childish pride, or because I associated some idea of glory with this wound. This must unquestionably have been the case, for though not now able to recal the precise ideas that passed through my mind at the time, I well remember that when any one inquired of my preceptor what accident had befallen me, and he replied it was in consequence of a fall, I always added—when performing my exercise.

It is evident, if we carefully attend to what passes in the minds of children, that we may discover the nascent principles of our virtues and vices; thus the feelings I experienced on this occasion afforded an early indication of the love of glory, though neither the priest Ivaldi, nor any of my family, were capable of perceiving it.

About a year after my eldest brother's

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return to the college at Turin, he became affected with a pulmonic complaint, which degenerating into phthisic, soon conducted him to the tomb. At the commencement of his illness he returned from college, when I was sent to the country to preserve me from receiving any injury. In fact, he died at Asti in the course of the summer, without my having ever again seen him. In the mean time, my paternal uncle, the Chevalier Pellegrino Alfieri, to whom the management of my property had been confided since the death of my father, and who had just returned from his travels through France, Holland, and England, paid us a visit at Asti. Being a man of great intelligence, he immediately perceived that I must remain extremely ignorant, if the same system were continued in regard to my education. A few months after his arrival at Turin, he wrote to my mother, to inform her that it was his determination to place me at the academy of that city. The period of my departure coincided with the death of my brother. I can never forget the figure, actions, and discourse of my mo-

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ther, who was inconsolable on this occasion. "God," she exclaimed sobbing, "has bereaved me of one child for ever, and who knows for how long a time I may be deprived of the other?" By her third husband she had an only daughter and two sons, successively born during my stay in the academy of Turin. Her grief deeply affected me; but, in a short time, the desire of beholding new scenes, of travelling post in a few days, I, who had hitherto never travelled beyond fifteen miles from Asti in a carriage, drawn by two peaceable oxen; in short, a thousand other infantile ideas which my vivid imagination presented to my mind, tended in a great measure to assuage the grief occasioned by my brother's death, as well as by the affliction of my mother. But when the moment of departure drew nigh, I was ready to expire with grief; it cost me perhaps still more to take leave of my preceptor Ivaldi, than even to bid adieu to my mother.

Placed almost by force in the carriage by a worthy old man, who was to accompany

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me to my uncle's at Turin, I at length set out attended by a domestic. He was named André, from Alexandria, a youth of great intelligence, and tolerably well educated, considering his condition in life, as, in our country, reading and writing were not then very generally taught to the lower orders.

It was in the month of June, 1758, I know not on what day, that I left my maternal home at a very early hour in the morning. I did nothing but weep during the first stage. On changing horses I alighted in a court-yard, and being extremely thirsty, without asking for a glass of water, I approached the horses trough, and dipping in one of the corners of my hat, quenched my thirst without further ceremony. My mentor, informed of what I had done by the postillion, severely reprimanded me; but I replied, that when people were travelling they ought to accustom themselves to every thing, and that a good soldier should never drink in any other manner. How I acquired these warlike ideas I know not, for my mother

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had brought me up very effeminately, and had taken the most ridiculous precautions in order to preserve my health. They must have originated in a small portion of vanity, which began to display itself in my character from the moment I was freed from the restraint of authority.

I shall here terminate the first epocha of my childhood. I am now about to enter on a more extensive sphere of action, and I trust I shall be able better, though with more brevity, to depict my character than I have hitherto done. This sketch of my early infancy, which, perhaps, separately taken, is very useless, will be regarded as still more so by those who, believing themselves men, forget that man is only a continuation of the child.

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Second Epoch.

ADOLESCENCE,

INCLUDING EIGHT YEARS OF UNPRODUCTIVE EDUCATION.

CHAPTER I.

Departure from my maternal Home—Entrance into the Academy of Turin—its Description.

Behold me then travelling with the utmost rapidity, thanks to the *drink-money* which I had obtained from my travelling companion to bestow on the first postillion. This gained me the good-will of the second, who posted on with incredible celerity; and from time to time turned his head,

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smiling, and making a sign with his eye in order to obtain a similar gratuity from the steward, who already old, and being exhausted by relating a thousand foolish anecdotes in order to console me, afterwards fell into a profound sleep, and snored aloud. The rapid motion of the carriage conveyed to my mind a sensation of pleasure I had never before experienced; for in my mother's coach, which I indeed seldom entered, we never exceeded a slow trot. The entrance into this city by the Porta Nuova, the whole way to the Annunziata, near to which my uncle resided, appeared in my eyes so extremely beautiful and magnificient as to overwhelm me with rapture. The evening, however, did not pass so happily away; I found myself in an unknown mansion among strangers, without my mother, without my preceptor, and in presence of my uncle, whom I had scarcely seen above once, and who was infinitely less kind and affable than my mother, I felt all the sorrow of the preceding day renewed. In a few days, however, I became habituated to all these novelties, I even acquired

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a degree of vivacity I had never before displayed, and which became so troublesome to my uncle, that he found it necessary to restrain it. I not only kept the house in an uproar, but having no preceptor, my time was absolutely lost. Instead, therefore, of deferring my entrance to the academy till October, according to his original design, he sent me to it on the 1st of August, 1758.

Thus at the age of nine years and a half I suddenly found myself transplanted among strangers, wholly separated from my parent, isolated and abandoned, thus to speak, to myself; for this species of public education, if it deserve the name, has no influence over the mind of youth; and, God knows, even their studies are too often neglected. No maxims of morality, no rules for their conduct through life, are ever inculcated on their tender minds; and how, indeed, could it be done by professors, who are themselves, both in theory and practice, wholly unacquainted with the world.

This academy was a magnificent edifice

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of a quadrangular form, with an immense court in the middle. Two sides of the building were occupied by the pupils, the two others by the Theatre Royal, and the Royal Archives. Facing the latter was that which we occupied, and which was called the *second and third apartment*; opposite the theatre were those of the first, of which I shall shortly speak. The upper gallery on our side was denominated the *third apartment*, and was appropriated to the youngest pupils and the inferior schools. The gallery upon the first floor, called the second gallery, was reserved for adults. A half or third of whom studied at the university, an edifice contiguous to the academy; the others were occupied by those who studied military tactics. Every gallery contained at least four sleeping rooms, in each of which eleven pupils were accommodated, over whom a priest presided, termed an assistant, and who, for the most part, was only a peasant habited in the garb of a priest, to whom no salary was allowed. Having board and lodging these assistants generally directed their attention

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to the study of theology or law. Sometimes, however, old ignorant priests were appointed to this office. One third, at least, of the side of this building, called the *first apartment,* was occupied by the king's pages to the number of twenty or twenty-five, who were completely separated from us by the opposite angle of the large court.

As for us young students, we were, as must be obvious, very ill situated, between a theatre which we were not allowed to enter above five or six times in the year, during the Carnival; and the pages, who, from attending the amusements of their royal master, seemed to enjoy a much more free and varied mode of life than our own; they even vied with those foreigners who occupied the first apartment, almost to the exclusion of the natives. They consisted chiefly of English, Russians, and Germans, and a few individuals from other states of Italy. It resembled an inn rather than an academy; they were subjected to no restraint, except that of returning before midnight. They were besides allowed to

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go to court, and to attend public spectacles in whatever company they pleased. The greatest punishment to us poor inhabitants of the second and third apartment was the local situation of the place; being such, that, in order to reach the chapel, or repair to the dancing or fencing room, we were obliged to pass through the gallery of the first apartment, and have constantly under our eyes the insulting and unruly conduct of its foreign inmates, which we could ill reconcile with the severity of the discipline to which we were subjected, and which we compared to that of a galley-slave. Those who formed such an arrangement must have been altogether unacquainted with the nature of the human heart, otherwise they must have been aware of the baneful influence which the sight of such constant dissipation must have produced on the minds of youth.

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CHAPTER II.

Early and ill directed Studies.

I was then domesticated in what was termed the best chamber of the *third apartment,* under the care of my domestic André, who, in the absence of my mother, uncle, and every other relative, tyrannized over me with the malignity of a demon. The day after my entrance at the academy I underwent an examination in presence of the professors, that they might ascertain whether I was sufficiently qualified to be admitted into the fourth class, and they assured me I might very readily be transferred to the third in three months, if I pursued my studies with assiduity. It was now that I first became sensible of the power of emulation, since in conjunction with other youths somewhat older than

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myself, I was admitted to a new examination in the month of November, in consequence of which I rose to the third class. Our master was a priest, named Degiovanni, if possible more ignorant than even my first preceptor Ivaldi, and who had not like him any affection towards me, or much solicitude for my improvement, having the charge of fifteen or sixteen scholars, who had all an equal right to that attention, of which he was not very prodigal.

It was thus I was trained up in this little school, the most ignorant among the ignorant, and under the care of masters not much more enlightened than ourselves. We had given us to translate *Cornelius Nepos*, and some of the Eclogues of Virgil. We composed very foolish insipid exercises, so that in any other college, where the pursuits of the pupils were better directed, we would have at most appeared as a very backward fourth class. Stimulated, however, by emulation, I had outstripped the best of my companions; but as soon as I had attained this eminence I slackened my zeal, and sunk into a kind of

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torpor. This was, perhaps, excusable, as nothing could exceed the wearisomeness and insipidity of such studies. We rendered, it is true, the lives of Cornelius Nepos into Italian; but none of us, not even the master himself, knew the history of the individuals whose lives we translated, what country had given them birth, at what period and under what government they flourished, nor, in short, what was meant by a government. All our ideas were limited, confused, or erroneous; there were no objects either to attract the scholar or the master. Our time was shamefully lost; not through want of application, for those who exerted the most had nothing to learn. In this manner the best days of our youth were consumed in vain. The whole of the year 1759 was wasted in similar pursuits, after which I was transferred to the higher classes. The master, Father Amatis, who was an intelligent and sagacious priest, afforded me all the information in his power; it was under his tuition I received the most improvement, and as far as the absurd mode of

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study established in these classes would admit, I became a considerable proficient in the Latin. About this time my emulation was still farther excited by a youth, who was my rival in composing exercises, and who sometimes succeeded better than myself. He left me still farther behind in the exercise of memory, sometimes reciting six hundred verses of Virgil's Georgics, without stopping or making a single mistake; while I, on the contrary, could never repeat above four hundred, and those very incorrectly; a circumstance which gave me great uneasiness. As far as I can now recal to mind my feelings on the occasion, it appears to me, that even in these childish disputes, my character was not naturally bad; for though suffocated with rage, and though I frequently burst into tears at my defeat, and even violently reproached my rival, yet either from his being better tempered than myself, or that I became appeased without knowing why, we seldom fought, though nearly of equal strength; and, in fact, lived generally on terms of friendship with each other. I

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believe my infantile, yet unbounded ambition, found consolation, and a species of recompense for the inferiority of my memory, from the success I enjoyed in regard to my exercises, for the composition of which I usually bore away the prize. Besides, this rival of mine had something so frank, noble, and prepossessing about him, that it was utterly impossible to hate him. I evinced from my earliest infancy an innate love for every thing great and noble, both in the animate and inanimate works of creation; whatever was stamped with this character prejudiced my mind in the first instance, and for a time clouded my judgment, and prevented me from discovering the truth.

Though during the year I attended these classes my morals remained pure and untainted, yet almost without being conscious of it myself, I was in some measure under the dominion of the passion of love. It was at this period that Ariosto fell into my hands, though in what manner I cannot now recollect; I certainly did not purchase it, for at this period I did not possess a single

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farthing; neither, I am persuaded, did I purloin it, the remembrance of a similar fault which I once committed being still fresh in my memory. I rather think I obtained it volume by volume from one of my schoolfellows, in exchange for half a chicken, which was usually given us every Sunday; so that my first Ariosto must have cost me the sacrifice of a couple of chickens in four weeks. I am not, however, certain of this fact, at which I am extremely sorry, for I should wish to know whether the first time I drank at the fountain of Hippocrene it was at the expence of my stomach, and if I had sacrificed to the muses the most delicate morsel then in my possession. It was not the only exchange which I made in this way, for I perfectly well recollect having never tasted these highly esteemed *dominical chickens* for six successive months, in order to barter them for little histories which were related to us by a certain parasite, who sharpened his wits in order to fill his belly. He admitted none to the number of his auditors but those who could pay

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him in eatables: but in whatever manner the acquisition was made, I possessed an Ariosto, which I read here and there without method, and without comprehending the half of what I read. It may hence be judged how little attention had been given to our improvement, when I, the best scholar of the class; I, who could translate into Italian prose Virgil's Georgics, which are more difficult than even the Æneid itself, was unable to comprehend the most easy of our own poets. I shall never forget when perusing the song of Alcini, when I came to those charming passages in which her beauty is so well pourtrayed, I exerted in vain every effort to comprehend them. I found it impossible to seize the true meaning of the two last verses of this stanza:—

"*Non cosi strettamente edera preme.*"

I consulted with my rival, but he was no wiser than myself, and we lost ourselves in a labyrinth of conjectures. These secret consultations were not, however, long suffered to continue.

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The assistant having observed a small book in our possession, which we concealed on his approach, at length discovered our hidden treasure, and ordered us to deliver up the other volumes, which he carried to the sub-prior; thus disconcerting us juvenile poets, and leaving us without a guide.

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CHAPTER III.

Respecting the Relatives entrusted with the Care of my Adolescence at Turin.

During the two first years of my abode at the academy, I learned scarcely any thing. My health began to decline; for we were only provided with a spare diet, the quality of which was not even good. Little attention was, besides, paid to us in other respects; and the hours allotted for rest were too few. I was the more sensibly hurt by this regimen, because it was in direct opposition to that I was accustomed to in my mother's house. I did not increase in stature, and became so emaciated as to resemble a wax-taper. I was besides successively attacked by a variety of complaints, the most remarkable of which was an eruptive dis-

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ease on my head and temples resembling a kind of leprosy, from which I suffered inconceivable distress.

My paternal uncle, the Chevalier Pelligrino Alfieri, was nominated governor of Coni, where he resided eight months in the year; so that I had no relatives at Turin, except the family of Tournon, from whom my mother was descended, and Count Benedict Alfieri, whom I was in the habit of terming uncle, though he was only a cousin of my father's. He was first architect to the king, and lived near the theatre-royal, which he had designed and executed with equal skill and elegance. I sometimes went to dine at his house, and sometimes only to call, according to the caprice of André, who exerted over me the most despotic sway, under pretence of having received letters from my uncle at Coni.

Count Benedict, who was really a worthy character, was extremely fond of me. He was passionately attached to his art, of an unambitious character, and almost totally unacquainted with every thing unconnected with the fine arts. I could mention many

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proofs of his immoderate love for architecture. This passion led him even to speak to me, who was then a mere child, with the greatest enthusiasm, of the divine Michael Angelo Buonarotti, whose name he never pronounced without bowing his head, or taking off his hat, with a respect and devotion which can never be effaced from my memory. He had spent the greatest part of his life at Rome, and was an enthusiastic admirer of the *antique*. In consequence of this, however, he sometimes departed from true taste in the construction of his buildings, by endeavouring to conform to the modern style; a proof of which may be seen in the whimsical plan of the Church of Carignano, built in the form of a fan: but none of these defects are visible in the construction of the theatre already mentioned, in the king's riding-school, in the saloon of Stupinigi, and in the magnificent façade of the Temple of St. Pietro. Perhaps the flight of his genius might, after all, be retarded by the insignificant remuneration which the King of Sardinia had it only in his power to

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bestow on him for his services. The noble plans which he left at his death, and which are in the possession of his majesty, afford a proof of the truth of this suggestion. Among these are various projects for the embellishment of Turin, and particularly a plan for rebuilding the decayed wall separating the Piazza del Castello from the Piazza Reale. This wall, on what account I know not, is termed *the Pavilion*.

I experience much gratification in speaking of this uncle, though it is now only that I am able fully to appreciate his abilities; for when I was at the academy, however sincerely I was attached to him, I frequently became weary of his society. Such is the whimsicality of the human mind and the influence of prejudice! What wearied me most was his wretched pronunciation of the Tuscan, which he had adopted during his stay at Rome, and which he never endeavoured to correct, although the Italian is wholly unknown at Turin. Such, however, is the force of the sublime and beautiful, that those who at the first scoffed at my uncle's Tuscan, became in a

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little while so sensible of its superiority over their own barbarous jargon, that on addressing him, they always imitated his mode of expression. This was more particularly the case with those nobles who were anxious that their houses should resemble palaces. Fruitless attempt! in which this excellent man, without any profit, and merely through friendship, lost the half of his time in giving pleasure to others—a thing, as I have often heard him acknowledge, not only disagreeable to himself, but extremely injurious to his art. In this way most of the houses of the principal inhabitants of Turin were embellished by him: to some courts, vestibules, and great gates, were added; and in many stair-cases and other interior conveniencies also remain as monuments of his readiness to serve his friends, or those who styled themselves such. This uncle had visited Naples, in company with my father, nearly two years before his marriage; and it was from him I acquired much information concerning my deceased parent. Among other things, my uncle told me, that when viewing

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Mount Vesuvius, he was anxious to descend to the brink of the interior crater, which was extremely deep, and which he could only accomplish by means of ropes held by men on the edge of the exterior opening.

Nearly twenty years afterwards, when I first visited this spot, such great changes had occurred, that the descent was no longer practicable.

But it is time to return to my subject.

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CHAPTER IV.

Continuation of my unprofitable Studies.

As none of my relations took the smallest interest in my concerns, I spent the best years of my life in almost total idleness.

Constantly sick, and having my body covered with sores or ulcers, I became the constant sport of my companions, who bestowed on me the nick-name of *Carcase;* while those among them who wished to appear still more witty added the epithet *rotten.*

From the state of my health and other circumstances, I fell into a profound melancholy; and my love of solitude daily acquired new strength. Nevertheless, I was admitted, during 1760, into the rhetorical class; for notwithstanding the numerous disadvantages under which I laboured, I had contrived to dedicate a few moments to

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study; and very little knowledge was necessary in the candidate for this and similar distinctions. The professor of rhetoric was less intelligent than my last master; for though he explained to us the Æneid, and caused us to compose Latin verses, it seemed to me that, instead of acquiring more knowledge, I became daily less a proficient in the Latin tongue.

During the year I attended rhetoric, I happened to recover my little Ariosto, by picking it up volume by volume from the sub-prior, who had placed them on his shelves, among a great many others. I seized the opportunity of doing this, when the youths were admitted into his chamber, to witness the ascent of a balloon from the windows which were in the front of the building, and from which we could enjoy a better view of this spectacle than from those of the gallery which were in the side. I took care, as soon as I had taken a single volume, to press the books together, so as to fill up the chasm, and prevent its loss being observed. It was in this manner that, during four successive

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days, I was fortunate enough to recover my lost treasure; but, though enchanted with my success, I maintained a profound silence on the subject. Reflecting at present on this fact, I perfectly recollect that from the moment I recovered my Ariosto, I never again opened it. Several circumstances led to this neglect; for besides the bad state of my health, which was certainly the principal, *such a capital rhetorician was I*, that the difficulty of comprehending this poet had rather augmented than diminished. The constant interruption in the story of the piece had likewise a tendency to make me relinquish the study of Ariosto, as I knew not where to find the sequel—a circumstance which even now displeases me, as being contrary to nature, and destructive of all poetic effect.

At the period of which I am speaking, I was unacquainted with the name even of Tasso, whose works would have been infinitely more conformable to my taste. There fell into my hands at this time, however, I recollect not in what manner, the Æneid of Annibal Caro, which I read more than

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once with the greatest avidity, feeling warmly interested for Turnus and Camilla. I succeeded in concealing this work, in order to assist me in the translation of some exercises given us by the master---a circumstance which greatly retarded my advancement in a knowledge of the Latin. I had then never perused any of the works of our other poets, except some operas of Metastasio, such as Cato, Artaxerxes, the Olympiad, &c. and a few others which chance had thrown into my hands, among the small collection which is performed during the carnival. They amused me very much till I reached the chorus, which interrupts the development of the passions, at the precise point where I had begun to identify myself with the subject. This gave me greater pain and disgust than even the interruptions of Ariosto. Different comedies of Goldoni, which were lent me by the master, also afforded me much entertainment; but my dramatic genius, the germ of which perhaps existed in my mind, was gradually extinguished, through want of proper aliment, or encouragement

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of any kind. In short, my ignorance was as great as that of either my preceptors or fellow-students.

During the long and frequent intervals in which I was obliged, from ill health, to keep my chamber, one of the students, who, though somewhat older and much stronger, was yet more ignorant than myself, employed me occasionally in translating, extending, or composing verses for him. He compelled me to comply with his demands by this irresistible argument—if you are willing to do my work, I will give you two balls to play with: here they are; you see they are large, of four colours, well made, of fine cloth, and extremely elastic; if you are not willing to do it, I will give you two *blows;* and he raised his athletic arm, which he held over my head. I chose the two balls, and proceeded with his work. At first I faithfully executed my task in the best manner I was able; and the master evinced not a little surprise at the unexpected progress of his scholar, who had been hitherto considered as extremely dull and stupid. For my own

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part, I religiously kept the secret, more from the natural taciturnity of my temper, than from any dread of the threatened blows. Nevertheless, as I soon became tired of his balls, and disgusted with the fatigue, I began to pay less attention to the composition of these exercises, notwithstanding the praises bestowed on my talents, till at last I committed various solecisms, such as *potebam*, which at length drew on him the hisses of his comrades and the rod of the master. Though he found himself thus ridiculed in public, and forced to resume his *ass's skin*, he durst not openly vent his anger upon me; but he never afterwards employed me to execute his tasks. The disgrace with which he would have been loaded, had I discovered the secret, restrained the rage with which he was agitated. I never betrayed him; but I secretly laughed when others related that *potebam* and similar solecisms had found their way into his compositions, in which no one suspected I had the smallest share. I might probably be restrained within the limits of discretion, by the recollection of

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the hand which was held over my head, which I saw continually before my eyes, ready to take vengeance on me for so many balls expended to procure only ridicule. Hence I learned, that mankind are only governed by mutual terror.

Having passed the year which ought to have been dedicated to the study of rhetoric, in these puerile and insipid occupations, sometimes sick, always indolent, I was called to the customary examination, and judged qualified to enter on the study of philosophy. We went twice a day to the university, which was near the academy, in order to attend these classes. The morning was dedicated to geometry, and the afternoon to philosophy. Thus I commenced philosopher, before having completed my thirteenth year; and so proud was I of this appellation, that I already in imagination conceived myself in the *highest class*. I also reaped much amusement from going out of the house twice a day: besides, it often afforded me an opportunity of making an escape to the city, by leaving the school under some pretext or other.

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Though I was the least of all the scholars who inhabited the second *apartment*, to which I had descended, it was this very inferiority in point of age, stature, and strength, which gave me greater courage, and induced me to distinguish myself. In short, I studied at first with so much assiduity as to enable me to make a figure in the examinations, which took place every evening in the academy. I usually replied to the questions as well, or perhaps better than any of the others; but this was only a simple act of memory, since, to confess the truth, I did not comprehend this pedantic philosophy, which is not only extremely insipid; but from being envelloped in Latin, it was necessary always to dispute with the dictionary in our hands. As to geometry, a course of which I went through, consisting of the first six books of Euclid, I was never able to understand the fourth proposition; and I do not even at present comprehend it, having always possessed an *anti-geometrical head.*

The peripatetic philosophy, which we attended after dinner, usually acted as an

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opiate. During the first half hour, we wrote what the professor dictated; and he afterwards explained it in Latin, God knows how! in the three quarters of an hour we remained. All the students, enveloped in their large cloaks, slept most profoundly. Among these *philosophers*, no other noise was heard, save the languid voice of the professor, and the high, low, and middle tones of the *snorers*, which formed the *finest concert* imaginable. Besides the irresistible power of this soporific philosophy, what still contributed to subject us of the academy to the influence of sleep was our rest being interrupted in the morning, owing to the early hour at which we were obliged to rise. As to myself, the short period I was allowed for sleep deranged the functions of my stomach. This circumstance became so evident to the superiors, that they indulged me in sleeping till seven o'clock, instead of forcing me to rise at a quarter before six, when the students assembled to hear prayers, previous to entering on their studies at half past seven.

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CHAPTER V.

Different trifling Facts of the same Kind as those in the preceding Chapter.

In the winter of the year 1762, my uncle, the Governor of Coni, returned for a few months to Turin; and having observed the bad state of my health, obtained for me some indulgences in the quantity and quality of my diet. This, in conjunction with the relaxation I enjoyed from attending the university, from the daily visits I made to my uncle during the holidays, and from the sweet periodical slumber of three quarters of an hour, which I enjoyed in the philosophical class, all tended in some measure to increase my growth, and restore me to my wonted health.

About this period my uncle, in quality

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of our guardian, removed my sister Julia from the convent of St. Anastasia at Asti to that of S. Croce at Turin. She had remained six years in the former, under the care of one of our aunts, the widow of the Marquis of Trotti, who had retired thither some time before. Julia had been even worse educated than myself. This proceeded from the absolute sway she had acquired over our worthy aunt. This blind attachment, instead of being advantageous, proved more injurious to her every succeeding day. Julia, who was my senior by two years, now approached her fifteenth year. In Italy this is not a tranquil age: the dawning of passion then begins to sway the tender and inexperienced heart of youth. An attachment she had formed in the convent displeased my uncle, though the object of it was in every respect her equal; and it was this circumstance which determined him to remove her to Turin, in order to place her under the care of a maternal aunt, a sister of the community of S. Croce. The sight of this sister, whom I had once so tenderly loved, and who was now much

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improved, afforded me the greatest pleasure, and restored me to health and spirits. I was the more delighted with the possibility of sometimes seeing her, as I conceived that my presence in a great degree tended to assuage the sorrows of her heart. Though separated from her lover, she persisted in saying that she would one day espouse him.

I had obtained permission from André to visit the convent almost every Saturday and Sunday, which were our weekly holidays. Often did I spend the time of my visit, which lasted for an hour or more, in weeping with this dear girl at the grate. These tears were to me a great relief; and I always left the convent more tranquil, though not more gay than when I entered it. In my quality of philosopher, I endeavoured to inspire her with fortitude, and encouraged her to persist in her resolution, assuring her that she would eventually overcome my uncle's obstinacy. But time, whose influence is so powerful on the firmest hearts, was not long in exerting its sway over her mind. Absence, obstacles, dissipation, and, above all, the superior opportunities of im-

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provement which she now enjoyed, consoled her, and in a few months wholly obliterated her love.

During the holidays of the present year, I went for the first time to the theatre of Carignan, to witness the performance of the opera buffa. This indulgence was procured for me by my uncle the architect, at whose house I slept, on returning from the theatre, as at that late hour it was impossible to gain admittance to the academy, without infringing the rules, by which every pupil was obliged to return at half an hour after sun-set. During the carnival, we were permitted once a week to go in a body to the king's theatre; but my indulgent uncle, on the present occasion, solicited our superior to suffer me to accompany him to his country-house, where he proposed to remain for a day and a night. By this subterfuge, I had the pleasure of hearing the opera buffa of *Mercato di Malmantile*. It was composed by a celebrated master, and performed by the first singers in Italy, Carratoli Baglioni and her daughters. This varied and

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enchanting music sunk deep into my soul, and made the most astonishing impression on my imagination; it agitated the utmost recesses of my heart to such a degree, that for several weeks I experienced the most profound melancholy, which was not, however, wholly unattended with pleasure. I became tired and disgusted with my studies, while at the same time the most wild and whimsical ideas took such possession of my mind, as would have led me to pourtray them in the most impassioned verses, had I not been wholly unacquainted with the true nature of my own feelings. It was the first time music had produced such a powerful effect on my mind. I had never experienced any thing similar, and it long remained engraven on my memory. When I recollect the feelings excited by the representation of the grand operas, at which I was present during several carnivals, and compare them with those which I now experience, on returning from the performance of a piece I have not witnessed for some time, I am fully convinced that nothing acts so powerfully

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on my mind as all species of music, and particularly the sound of female voices, and of *contro-alto*. Nothing excites more various or terrific sensations in my mind. Thus the plots of the greatest number of my tragedies were either formed, while listening to music, or a few hours afterwards.

The first year of my attendance at the university having now elapsed, my uncle of Coni was informed by the professors, *it is evident with how much justice*, that I had studied with great assiduity; on which account he invited me to pass twelve days with him in that city. This short journey, between Turin and Coni, through the fertile and smiling plains of Piedmont, was the second I had ever made in my life. It afforded me much amusement, and proved extremely beneficial to my health. Exercise and pure air were always reviving and salutary to me. The pleasure of this excursion was, however, in some measure destroyed, by my performing it with hack horses, which travelled at a snail's pace. It

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was more particularly irksome to me, who had, four or five years before, posted with the rapidity of lightning, between Asti and Turin. It seemed to me as if I had become feeble as I advanced in age; and I almost conceived myself dishonoured by the slow rate at which we proceeded. On entering Carignan, Raconis, Savillan, and even the smallest villages in our way, I shrunk back in my wretched vehicle, closing my eyes in order to avoid seeing or being seen by the inhabitants. It seemed to me as if every one knew how I had formerly travelled, and laughed at the present humiliating reverse. Did these feelings originate in a noble and ardent soul, or proceed from a weak and haughty mind? I find myself incompetent to reply to this question: others will be able to judge from the history of the succeeding years of my life. Of one thing, however, I am certain—that, had I fallen under the care of a man intimately acquainted with the human heart, my character might have been moulded into any form he pleased, by the judicious application of the love of

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praise and of glory, which from my earliest infancy had such a powerful influence over my mind.

During my short stay at Coni, I composed my first sonnet, which I durst not however acknowledge, as it consisted only of a few indifferent verses, the most of which was borrowed from Metastasio and Ariosto, the only poets I had then read. I believe they were also defective in rhyme and measure; for though I had composed hexameter and pentameter Latin verses, I had never been taught any rules for the composition of Italian poetry. I have racked my brain to remember two or three of these stanzas, but in vain. I only recollect that they were in praise of a lady of whom my uncle was enamoured, and who was, besides, rather a favourite with myself. This sonnet was undoubtedly execrable: nevertheless it was much admired, not only by the lady herself, but by others who were equally incompetent to decide on its merits; yet, in consequence of such praises, I conceived myself already a poet. My uncle, however, like a true soldier, was rigid in his

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manners, and though well versed in history and politics, was yet unacquainted with poetry, for which he had no relish. Hence he took every opportunity to repress the efforts of my infant muse, which so chilled my poetic enthusiasm that I relinquished every idea of writing verses till the age of twenty-five. How many sonnets, good or bad, did not my uncle stifle along with this first production of my pen.

On the following year the study of physics and ethics succeeded to that of our tiresome philosophy: we attended the former in the morning, and the latter in the afternoon. The study of physics was not wholly destitute of attractions to me, but the constant use of the Latin language, and my total ignorance of geometry, a course of which I had gone through, proved invincible obstacles to my advancement. A love of truth obliges me to confess, though to my eternal disgrace, that after attending a course of lectures on physics by the celebrated Beccaria, I did not remember a single definition: neither did I reap greater benefit from his learned course of electricity,

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which he has enriched with so many important discoveries. It happened now as it did when I attended the geometrical class —by a simple effort of memory I always succeeded in answering the questions which were put to me, and generally received more praise than blame from the masters.

My uncle, to whom I had been represented as extremely industrious, proposed in the winter of 1763 to recompense me by a small present, a thing which he had never before even hinted at. My domestic André announced this to me some months before with an air of importance, and this undefined hope, which my imagination embellished, gave a fresh stimulus to my mind, and rendered me more eager, parrot-like, to acquire my lesson by rote.

At length my uncle's valet one day shewed me this famous present, which consisted of a silver sword of curious workmanship. Fond of this bauble, and conceiving it only as the just reward of my industry, I daily expected, but in vain, that it would be given to me. The propriety of requesting it from my uncle was suggested to me, but

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the same unbending disposition, which a few years before prevented me from making known my wishes to my maternal aunt, though urged by her to do so, kept me silent in the present instance; and as there were no other means to obtain this sword, it never came into my possession.

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CHAPTER VI.

Weakness of my Constitution—continual ill Health —Incapacity for all Exercise, particularly that of Dancing, and the Reason why.

In this manner passed the year of my attendance on the class of physics. In the summer my uncle was appointed Viceroy of Sardinia, and when about to set out in the month of September, he recommended me to the care of the few relatives I had still left at Turin. He renounced the management of my pecuniary concerns, and nominated one of his friends joint guardian with himself. From this period I was less restricted in my expences. My new guardian allowed me a monthly sum, an arrangement to which my uncle had always objected, and which even now appears to me to have been extremely unreasonable.

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Perhaps he was influenced in this respect by André, who must have been a great gainer by disbursing every shilling which was expended; it besides kept me in a state of greater dependence on him.

Towards the end of the year 1762, I commenced the study of civil and canonical law; a course which, at the termination of four years, conducts the student to the highest academical honour—*a doctor's degree.*

After a few weeks attendance on these classes, I experienced a return of the eruptive malady under which I suffered so much two years before, and which was now more virulent than ever. My poor head could not retain the definitions, the digests, and all the apparatus of these *two species of law.* I cannot better describe the state of my head than by comparing it to a soil, which, burnt up by the scorching heat of the sun, cracks in every direction, forming fissures that remain open till returning showers again close them.

Of so inveterate a nature were these sores, that I could not, as formerly, avoid yield-

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ing up my hair a sacrifice to the scissars. Of all the misfortunes I ever experienced, this to me proved the most vexatious, not only from the necessity of having my head shaved, but of wearing a peruke, on which account I became the sport and derision of my comrades. I attempted at first to save my peruke from their attacks, but finding this was impossible, and that I even risked my own safety, I suddenly changed my tactics, and siezing the unlucky peruke before any one had affronted me, I flung it up in the air, and made it the butt of my own sport.

In fact, a few days after, the public clamour having subsided, I restored the peruke to its proper station, and was less persecuted, I may almost say more respected than the two or three others who were in the same chamber. Hence I learned that it is sometimes necessary to relinquish voluntarily what we cannot prevent others taking away from us.

In the course of this year I took lessons in geography, and on the harpsichord. Frequently amusing myself with globes and

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charts, I made some progress in the former of these studies, to which I joined that of history, and especially ancient history. My geographical master being a native of the Valley of Aousta, occasionally lent me some French works, which I began to comprehend a little, and among others Gil Blas, with which I was perfectly enchanted. This was the first book I had ever read from beginning to end, except the Æneid of Caro, and it afforded me much greater entertainment. About this period I likewise perused several romances, such as Cassandra, Almachilda, &c. and the interest with which they inspired me was in proportion to the horrific and melancholy nature of the story. Among other productions of this kind, I read the Memoirs of a Man of Quality six times at least.

Though an enthusiastic admirer of music, and though I even evinced some taste for this art, I made no progress upon the harpsichord, except being able to pass my fingers more lightly over the keys. I could never acquire a knowledge of the written characters; ear and memory was every thing with

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me. One reason, I believe, why I made such slow progress in the acquirement of this science, was taking these lessons immediately after dinner. I have observed throughout the whole course of my life, that this is a most unfavourable period for the exertion of intellect, and even for the simple application of the eyes on paper, or any other object whatever. The notes trembled before my eyes, and after an hours lesson I usually quitted the instrument without being able to distinguish objects: I continued ill and stupid during the remainder of the day.

I made as little progress in the arts of fencing and dancing. From the natural weakness of my frame, I was never able to preserve my guard, or remain in the other attitudes of this art. Besides my fencing-master attended me after dinner, and I frequently left the harpsichord to take up the sword.

To the natural hatred I had to dancing was joined an invincible antipathy towards my master—a Frenchman newly arrived from Paris. He possessed a certain air of

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polite assurance, which, joined to his ridiculous motions and absurd discourse, greatly increased the innate aversion I felt towards this frivolous art. So unconquerable was this aversion, that after leaving school I could never be prevailed on to join in any dance whatever. The very name of this amusement makes me shudder and laugh at the same time—a circumstance which is by no means unusual with me. I attribute, in a great measure, to this dancing master the unfavourable and perhaps erroneous opinion I have formed of the French people, who, nevertheless, it must be confessed, possess many agreeable and estimable qualities: but it is difficult to weaken or efface impressions received in early youth. Reason lessens their influence as we advance in life; yet it is necessary to watch over ourselves, in order to judge without passion, and we are frequently so unfortunate as not to succeed. Two other causes also contributed to render me from my infancy disgusted with the French character. The first was the impression made on my mind by the sight of those ladies who accom-

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panied the Dutchess of Parma in her journey to Asti, and who were all bedaubed with rouge, the use of which was then exclusively confined to the French. I have frequently mentioned this circumstance several years afterwards, not being able to account for such an absurd and ridiculous practice, which is wholly at variance with nature; for when either sick, intoxicated, or from any other cause, human beings besmear themselves with this detestable rouge, they carefully conceal it, well knowing that when discovered it only excites the laughter or pity of the beholders. These painted French figures left a deep and lasting impression on my mind, and inspired me with a certain feeling of disgust towards the females of this nation.

From my geographical studies resulted another cause of antipathy to that nation. Having seen on the chart the great difference in extent and population between England or Prussia and France, and hearing every time news arrived from the armies that the French had been beaten by sea and land; recalling to mind the first ideas

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of my infancy, during which I was told that the French had frequently been in possession of Asti, and that during the last time they had suffered themselves to be taken prisoners to the number of six or seven thousand, without resistance, after conducting themselves while they remained in possession of the place with the greatest insolence and tyranny; all these different circumstances being associated with the idea of the ridiculous dancing-master, tended more and more to rivet in my mind an aversion to the French nation. If mankind were like me inclined to search in themselves at an advanced period of life for the origin of their hatred or affection, either towards individuals or nations, they would perhaps find the first and insensible germs of such sentiments neither less absurd nor very different from those with which I was actuated.—Oh! how insignificant a being is man!

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CHAPTER VII.

Death of my paternal Uncle—I obtain my Liberty for the first Time—my Entrance into the first Apartment of the Academy.

My uncle only survived his appointment to the Viceroyalty of Sardinia six months; he had scarcely attained the sixtieth year of his age, but his health had long been in a declining state. Before his departure he frequently said to me that he would never return. I had never felt much affection towards him, which was not surprising, as I seldom saw him, and he had besides always treated me with a certain degree of severity, without, however, being tyrannical or unjust. Estimable by his probity and his courage, he had served his country with distinction: bold and energetic in his character, he possessed all the

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qualities of an excellent commander. He enjoyed the reputation of great intelligence; but this knowledge was buried under a mass of ill-arranged erudition, and accompanied with a perpetual anxiety concerning every thing relating to ancient and modern history. I experienced not, therefore, much affliction at his death, which I did not witness, and which all his friends had already predicted. By this event I was permitted to enjoy the large property of my father, augmented with the extensive fortune left me by my uncle.

According to the Piedmontese laws, the period of the guardianship of minors expires on their attaining the age of fourteen; another guardian is, however, appointed, who, without having any controul over their annual income, can legally prevent the alienation of their property. Having thus become master of my fortune at the age of fourteen, I acquired additional importance in my own eyes, and immediately began to build castles in the air.

At this period my *domestic-governor* André was very properly dismissed by order

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of my new guardian, as he had delivered himself up, without restraint, to idleness, intoxication, and every species of libertinism; he behaved to me with the greatest insolence, maltreating me without ceasing: when intoxicated, which frequently happened four or five times a week, he even went so far as to beat me.

During my frequent illnesses it was no unusual thing with him to leave me shut up in my chamber from dinner till the hour of supper. This practice tended, more than any thing else, to retard the re-establishment of my health, and to increase that strong constitutional melancholy to which I was subject from my birth. Yet who would believe that I mourned during several weeks for the loss of this same tyrant? As he was not permitted to enter the academy, I went for several months to visit him every Monday and Wednesday. I caused my new valet, who was a little awkward, but of a gay and gentle character, to conduct me to his house. I gave to André during these visits all the money I possessed, which was indeed not much. He

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at length found another master, and time, as much as the change of situation, in a short time banished him from my memory. If I was inclined to exhibit myself in a flattering point of view, I might represent the unreasonable attachment which I felt towards this unworthy domestic, as proceeding from a certain generosity of character; but nothing could be farther from the truth. This, however, did not prevent the reading of Plutarch from exciting in my mind a love of glory and virtue, nor my feeling and appreciating the pleasure and satisfaction of rendering good for evil, as often as I practised it. My attachment to André, who had caused me so many uneasy hours, proceeded partly from the habit of associating with him for seven years, and partly from a predilection which I felt for some of his good qualities. He always readily comprehended what was said to him, and executed any order with the greatest accuracy and dispatch. The tales with which he amused me were full of wit and interest, and I generally accommodated matters with him as soon as the anger which his insolence

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and bad conduct excited had passed over. I cannot, at present, comprehend how I became accustomed to the yoke of this man; I, who always detested open force or any kind of ill-treatment. This reflection has since frequently led me to pity those princes, who, without being perfectly imbecile, suffer themselves to be governed by people who have acquired an ascendancy over them during the period of adolescence; —fatal age! during which the impressions we receive are indelible.

The first advantage which I reaped from the death of my uncle was being able to attend the riding-school, which I had hitherto been prohibited doing. The Prior of the academy observing my great anxiety to be instructed in the art of riding, endeavoured to turn it to my advantage, by making it the reward of my studies; he promised to indulge me in this respect if I would take the degree of *Master of Arts* at the university. To obtain this it was only necessary to undergo a public examination in logic, physics, and geometry, which was always conducted with great negligence. I

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instantly acceded to this proposal, and having engaged a master who could at least assist me in recollecting the definitions in these sciences, which I had studied so superficially, I succeeded in fifteen or twenty days in making myself master of a dozen Latin sentences, which were all that was necessary in order to reply to the few questions which the examinators would put to me. Thus then I became, I know not how, in less than a month *Master of Arts;* and was immediately permitted to take my first lesson in riding—an art in which I became extremely expert in a few years. I was then below the middle size, and very meagre; my knees, which are the pivots of equitation, were extremely weak; but my passion for this exercise, and the determination of my will, supplied the place of strength. In a short time my progress was extremely rapid, particularly in the management of the horse. To this agreeable and noble exercise I owed the return of my health, the increase of my growth, and a certain vigour of constitution, which was soon visible to every eye.

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I thus entered on a new mode of life. Being master of my fortune by the death of my uncle, dignified with the title of *Master of Arts,* delivered from the tyranny of André, and mounted upon a noble courser, it is scarcely possible to conceive how much more commanding my countenance daily became. I frankly informed the prior and my new guardian that I was disgusted with the study of the law, that my time was wholly lost, and that, in short, I was determined to relinquish it. After an interview with each other, these gentlemen determined to remove me to the *first apartment,* were the pupils were subject to no constraint, as I have before mentioned.

On the 8th of May, 1763, I entered my new abode, where I remained nearly alone during the whole of the summer, but in autumn a vast number of foreigners arrived from every country; the majority of them were, however, British. An abundant table, continual amusement, plenty of sleep, daily exercise on horseback, and particularly the power of indulging all my whims, had, with renovated health, render-

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ed me daring and vivacious. My hair was grown, and having thrown aside my peruke, I dressed in the highest style of fashion. My clothes were extremely expensive, in order to compensate me for the black which the regulations of the academy had compelled me to wear during the five years I inhabited the *third* and *second apartments*. My guardian censured my expensive profusion in dress; but my tailor, who knew that I was able to pay, gave me credit, and I believe enriched himself at my expence. No sooner had I become my own master, and the possessor of an ample fortune, than I was surrounded by friends, companions, parasites, and, in short, by every thing that follows in the train of prosperity and departs on the approach of adversity. In the midst of this career, equally novel and impetuous, I neither became so unreasonable nor insignificant as might have been supposed. I often thought of returning to study: I experienced remorse and a kind of shame for my ignorance, which I could neither conceal from myself, nor wished to conceal from others;

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but having no solid basis of instruction, nor any one to direct my studies, and being besides almost ignorant of any language, I neither knew how to turn, nor where to direct my application.

The reading of French romances, the constant society of foreigners, the want of opportunity of speaking or hearing the Italian, had insensibly made me lose the little Tuscan I had acquired during my attendance on the Latin and rhetorical classes. The French was so familiar to me, that during a fit of study, which lasted two or three months of the first year I inhabited this apartment, I commenced the perusal of the thirty-six volumes of *l'Histoire Ecclesiastique de Fleuri*, which I read nearly through with the greatest avidity; I even made extracts from it in French, and proceeded so far as the eighteenth book. However, foolish, ridiculous, and unprofitable this study may appear, I nevertheless applied myself to it with the greatest perseverance, and even some degree of pleasure. From the perusal of this work I formed the most unfavourable opinion of

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priests and their concerns; but on throwing it aside I thought no more on the subject. I laughed very heartily on re-perusing these extracts twenty years afterwards. On relinquishing the reading of ecclesiastical history, I once more returned to that of romances; many of which, and among others the Arabian Night's Tales, I perused several times over.

Having contracted a friendship with many youths nearly of my own age, who resided in the city with their governors, we frequently hired wretched hacks, and made excursions into the country, during which we were oftener than once in danger of breaking our necks. Not unfrequently did we gallop down from the Hermitage des Camaldules to Turin, the road between which is paved and full of flint stones—an enterpize which no consideration would afterwards have tempted me to undertake, even with the best horses. We have frequently pursued, at full gallop, my valet on his Rosinante, instead of a stag, in the wood between the Pö and the Doria. Often having taken the bridle from his horse, did

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we follow him at full speed, hallooing, and whipping up our horses, imitating the sounds of the French horn, leaping over ditches, and fording the Doria at its confluence with the Pö; in short, we committed so many foolish pranks, that at length no one would lend us his horses at any price. By means of such exercises, however, both my corporeal and mental powers were strengthened and invigorated; and my mind prepared to merit and assert the physical and moral liberty I had acquired.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Compleat Idleness—I experience some Reverses, which I support with Patience.

At this period no one took any concern in my affairs except my new valet, whom my guardian had placed over me, and who had orders to accompany me wherever I went. But to tell the truth, as he was ignorant, and somewhat avaricious, I found little difficulty in bending him to my purpose, and ensuring his silence by means of gold. Naturally of a discontented and restless disposition, I very soon became impatient at being always followed by this domestic. This restraint appeared to me much more painful as I was the only one in the *first apartment* subject to any thing of a similar kind; they all went out and return-

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ed as often, and at whatever hour they pleased. The reason alleged for it was, my being much younger than any of the others, for I had not yet attained my fifteenth year. I obstinately persisted, however, in going out like the rest, without informing my valet or any other person. At first I was reprimanded by the governor; but this did not prevent me from continuing the same practice. The second time I was locked in my chamber; but no sooner were the doors opened, than I sallied forth as before. This led to a more strict confinement, which was again disregarded: and this fluctuation between liberty and restraint lasted for more than a month; the punishment was daily augmented, but always without producing the desired effect. I at last declared that it might as well be continued without interruption, for that I was determined to use my liberty as formerly, and that I insisted on being treated in every case like the rest of my companions; that this distinction was odious and injust, and rendered me the sport of my comrades; that if the governor thought I was neither

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sufficiently old, nor reasonable to associate with those of the *first apartment*, he could remand me back to the *second*. This arrogant discourse was punished by a confinement which lasted above three months, and particularly during the carnival of 1764. I obstinately refused to solicit my liberty; and thus enraged, and persevering, I believe I would sooner have perished than made any concessions.

I slept during the greatest part of the day, and in the evening when I rose out of bed, I caused a mattress to be placed by the fire on which I threw myself. I would not partake of the usual dinner of the academy, which was sent to my chamber, but cooked on my own fire *polenta*, and similar dishes. I totally neglected my external appearance, and acquired the air of a compleat savage.

Although I was prohibited from leaving my chamber, my friends were permitted to see me, and among others, I was visited by the trusty companions of my heroic sports; I was, however, sullen and silent, like a body without a soul; squatted on my mattress. I

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did not even reply to any questions which were put to me, but remained whole hours with my eyes fixed on the floor, and filled with tears, not one of which, however, I suffered to escape.

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CHAPTER IX.

The Nuptials of my Sister—my first Horse.

THE nuptials of my sister with Count Hyacinth Cumiana proved a new era in my existence. The marriage was solemnized on the 1st of May, 1764—a day which will for ever remain engraven on my memory. I accompanied the bridal party to the count's beautiful country seat, Cumiana, which was only about ten miles distant from Turin. I spent a month with them, during which the time glided rapidly away, as may be readily conceived by any one who recalls to mind that I had lately emerged from the prison in which I had been confined during the winter. I had obtained my liberty at the solicitation of my brother-in-law, and the restoration

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to the rights of those who occupied the *first apartment* in the academy. Thus, after several months rigorous confinement, I was raised to a level with my fellow students; at the same time I was less controuled in my expenditure—a right which could be no longer legally withheld from me. Immediately on my emancipation I purchased for myself a horse, which I took to Cumiana. He was a very beautiful animal, and extremely handsome in his whole form; but especially in his head, neck, and chest: I was extremely fond of this animal; even now I never think of him without experiencing the most lively emotions. My attachment was so excessive, that when he laboured under the slightest malady, which not unfrequently happened, because though fiery he was yet of a delicate constitution, sleep and appetite both forsook me. My fondness, however, when mounted on him, did not prevent me from teazing and tormenting him according as the whim and caprice of the moment exerted their influence on my mind. The delicacy of his frame furnished me with a pretext

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for keeping another saddle horse. Not contented with these, I soon set up a carriage; this required two other horses, which, with one for a cabriolet, and two for the saddle, made up a stud of seven, all of which I had procured in the short space of one year.

My parsimonious guardian exclaimed at my prodigality; but it was to no purpose. I adopted other means of expenditure, and particularly that of fine clothes. There were some of my English comrades who expended their money very profusely: not wishing to be surpassed in this respect, I even exceeded them in extravagance. But on the other hand, I lived with many young men who belonged not to the academy, in terms of greater intimacy than with the academists themselves. These being dependent on their parents, could not emulate my profusion; for though many of them were descended from the first families in Turin, they were yet restricted in their pocket expences. Truth, however, requires me to avow that, with regard to these young men, I then practised a virtue which

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in the sequel I found extremely useful, and from which I have never deviated.—It consisted in never wishing to surpass any of my acquaintances who regarded themselves as my inferiors, whether in point of physical strength, wit, generosity, or dignity of character. In fact, as often as I was obliged to assume any new and magnificent habit, whether to appear at court, or to dine with my academical associates, who rivalled me in such follies, I immediately threw it off after dinner when any of my other friends came to visit me; I uniformly put it aside in order that they might not see it, for it seemed in my eyes a crime to have such a dress, and still even a greater to display things which my friends and equals possessed not. Thus, though I had obtained, after much strife with my guardian, a very elegant chariot—a vehicle of no use whatever to a boy of sixteen years of age in a city such as Turin; I yet never entered it, because none of my acquaintances possessed one, but were obliged to walk on foot. I ran no risk of being envied for my saddle-horses, since they were

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at liberty to use them in common with myself, though each had his own maintained at the expence of their parents. This luxury was to me the most agreeable of any other, since it gave me no invidious superiority over the rest of my associates.

Whoever impartially examines this sketch will be able, I conceive, notwithstanding the errors incident to youth, and the faults originating from a love of indolence, and a bad system of education, to discover in it traces of a love of justice, uninfluenced by prejudices of birth or fortune, and a greatness of mind—features which constitute the essential characteristics of a free man, or of one deserving to be so.

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CHAPTER X.

First Attachment—little Excursions—Entrance into the Army.

HAVING gone to spend a month in the country with two brothers, who were my particular friends and associates in *my riding excursions*, I for the first time felt, in the most unequivocal manner, the influence of the tender passion. I became smitten with their sister-in-law, the wife of their elder brother, a young, vivacious, and enchanting brunette. In consequence of this attachment I fell into a profound melancholy, became restless whether in her presence or when absent from her, and so embarrassed as to prevent me uttering a single syllable, if I casually met her at a little distance from her brother's-in-law, who

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never quitted her. After our return from the country, I spent whole days in the public walks, and in going from one street to another, that I might have the pleasure of beholding her. What super-added to my sufferings was the impossibility of speaking of her, or of ever hearing her name even pronounced. In fine, I became a victim to all the feelings which Petrarch has so inimitably depicted in some of his pieces; feelings which few can comprehend, and which fewer still ever experience. This first attachment, which never produced any serious consequences, is not even now wholly extinguished in my mind. During my unceasing travels for a succession of years, it has uniformly continued, without any act of volition or almost perception on my part, to haunt my imagination, and to pursue my steps. It seemed like a voice crying from the inmost recesses of my heart—if thou provest thyself worthy, thou mayest render thyself acceptable in the sight of this female; and should circumstances change, thou mayest yet embody what has hitherto been only a shadow.

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During the autumn of 1765, I undertook, in company with my guardian, a journey to Genoa: it was the first I had ever made. The view of the sea excited my wonder and admiration, and I was never tired with contemplating it. The picturesque and magnificent situation of this superb city also served to enchant my senses. Had I been capable of transfusing my ideas into poetic language, I should most certainly have written verses; but during the two last years I had scarcely ever opened a book, except a few French romances, and some of the prose works of Voltaire, which last I never perused but with pleasure.

In my way to Genoa I experienced the inexpressible satisfaction of visiting my mother and my natal city. I had not seen these objects, so dear to me, for seven years, which at my age seemed so many centuries. On returning from Genoa, I conceived that I had performed a great exploit, and been a great traveller; but though I regarded myself, in consequence of this journey, as far superior to many of my academical friends,

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whom, however, I did not attempt to mortify by displaying my pride on the occasion, I yet felt myself humbled at the recollection of my inferiority in that respect to the students from remote countries, such as England, Germany, Poland, and Prussia, who considered my journey as a mere trifle. Hence I was seized with a mania of seeing foreign parts, and in particular of visiting their countries.

The last eighteen months that I remained in the *first apartment* flew rapidly away in idleness and continual dissipation. On my entrance into it, I had inscribed my name in the list of those who wish to be employed in the army; and three years afterwards, in the month of May, 1766, I was included in a promotion of about one hundred and fifty youths. For several months I had become disinclined to a military life, but not having withdrawn my name, I was forced to accept an ensign's commission in the provincial regiment of Asti. I had originally requested an appointment in the cavalry, on account of the passion I had for horses; but I afterwards changed the object of my

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solicitation, and was permitted to enter one of these provincial regiments, which, in time of peace, are only called out twice a-year for a few days. I remained then at perfect liberty to do nothing, the only state which was really irksome to me. My entrance into the militia obliged me, however, to quit the academy, where I resided voluntarily and with pleasure to myself now that I was freed from every species of restraint; but leave it I must, and in the course of May I took my departure after having been a resident in it for eight years. In the month of September I repaired for the first time to a review of my regiment at Asti, where I fulfilled with the greatest punctuality all the duties of my station, which I nevertheless detested. I could never accustom my mind to yield to that gradual chain of dependence *termed subordination,* which is the soul of military discipline, but which could never enter into the head of the future tragic poet.

On leaving the academy I took possession of a small but handsome apartment in the house of my sister. I amused myself

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in squandering away my money among my betters, in the purchase of horses, in superfluities of every kind, and in giving entertainments to my friends and my fellow students of the academy. A rage for travelling, which I had imbibed from my frequent intercourse with foreigners, induced me, contrary to my character, to devise a little stratagem in order to obtain permission to visit Rome and Naples for at least a year. I prevailed on an English preceptor, a Catholic, who had accompanied in their travels to Italy a Flemish and Dutch youth, with whom I passed more than a year at the academy, to take charge of me. I acted so as to render even these young people themselves anxious to have me for their travelling companion. I induced my brother-in-law to obtain permission from the king for me to depart under the direction of this English tutor, a man who was pretty far advanced in life, and possessed an excellent character. This was the first plot in which I had ever engaged, and I had little to reproach myself with. Some art was necessary to persuade the tutor, my

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brother-in-law, and especially my avaricious guardian, to accede to my views; but though I succeeded, I was ashamed and indignant at the flattery and dissimulation which I had been forced to employ in order to accomplish my purpose.

His majesty, who interfered in the most trifling affairs, was hostile to any of the nobles leaving the kingdom, especially a youth who had given early indications of possessing rather a singular character. It was therefore necessary that I should bend myself very low; but happily this did not prevent me from afterwards assuming my former height.

In thus concluding the second epoch of my life I am fully aware that it is composed of still more insipid minutiæ than even the first. I advise my readers not to dwell on it too long, and to bear in mind that these eight years of my adolescence comprise a period of sickness, idleness, and ignorance.

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Third Epoch.

YOUTH,

COMPREHENDING ABOUT TEN YEARS OF TRAVELLING AND IRREGULARITIES.

CHAPTER I.

First Journey—Milan, Florence, and Rome.

In the morning of the fourth of October, 1766, after passing a sleepless night, occupied with the most foolish ideas, I set out with inexpressible delight on this so much wished for journey.

I travelled in the same carriage with my three companions, our domestics followed in a coach, and we were preceded by my valet as courier. This was not the old man

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who acted in quality of my governor for nearly three years, but a domestic of my late uncle's, and who at his death had entered into my service: he was called Francis Elias. He had twice accompanied my uncle to Sardinia, and had attended him in his travels through France, England, and Holland. He possessed a mind of great acuteness, joined to uncommon activity, and was of more use than all the other four domestics put together. He must henceforth be considered as chief director of my travels, since I found him on this occasion our only sure guide; the others, masters and servants, possessing all the incapacity of infants, or of old men reduced to a state of second childhood.

We remained fifteen days at Milan. I had lived at Turin, the situation of which is so beautiful; I had seen Genoa two years before, it was therefore impossible I could be much pleased with Milan. The few things worthy of observation I did not see, or at least viewed them in a hasty and imperfect manner, being utterly ignorant of every useful and agreeable art.

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I recollect among other things that on visiting the Ambrosian Library, the librarian presented me with an autograph manuscript of Petrarch, which I, like a true savage, returned to him with the greatest indifference. I entertained a species of hatred against this divine poet, because during the time I attended philosophy, his works having fallen into my hands, I had opened them here and there, and had read or rather spelt a few verses without comprehending them. Imbibing the opinion of the French and of others equally arrogant and presumptuous, I repeated after them that Petrarch was nothing more than a *frivolous witling*.

Besides, the only books I had provided myself with for this twelve months journey were some travels in Italy, which were mostly written in French, and I thus proceeded to the summit of barbarism, towards which I had already made so many hasty strides. I conversed with my travelling companions wholly in French; and in all the Milanese houses to which we had introductions this was the only language spoken;

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so that when I wished to arrange any ideas in my poor little head they were always clothed in French. The few letters I wrote were written in French, the little ridiculous journal of my travels was likewise written in this language; yet all this was nothing. I only knew this language by rote, and if I had ever been taught any rules, I had perfectly forgotten them. I knew still less of Italian; such are the misfortunes which result from being born in an *amphibious* country, and from the erroneous education I had received.

We departed from Milan after a stay of nearly fifteen days. I shall not here repeat what I had written in the journal already mentioned; I committed it to the flames. Neither shall I enter into the details of the journey of an uninformed boy through countries so well known; nor attempt to describe all the cities which I visited in the true style of a Vandal. I will speak only of myself, since I am the unfortunate subject of this work.

We arrived in a few days at Bologna, by the way of Placenza, Parma, and Mo-

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dena. We stopped only a single day at Parma, and but a few hours at Modena, taking as usual only a cursory and imperfect view of the objects pointed out to us as worthy of notice.

The greatest pleasure I experienced in this journey, and indeed the only one of which I was susceptible, was the travelling post on the great roads. I neither found the porticos nor the pictures of Bologna to my taste; I was no connoisseur. Restless and inquiet, I teased without ceasing our preceptor to proceed. About the end of October we reached Florence. This was the first city since our departure from Turin, the situation of which pleased me, though I did not admire it so much as Genoa, which I had visited two years before. We remained there a month. During our stay, I visited in my usual manner those places pointed out by fame to the attention of travellers; such as the palace of Pitti, the gallery, and different churches. All this inspired me with disgust. I possessed no taste for the fine arts, and especially painting; my eyes were insensible to

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the beauty of this divine art. If I possessed a taste for any thing it was sculptor, and still more for architecture; perhaps from being associated with the memory of my excellent uncle. The tomb of Michael Angelo was among the small number of objects which attracted my attention. I made some reflections on the memory of this celebrated man; I felt from this moment, that no one can be truly great but those who leave behind them some durable monument of their talent and their genius. This idea was, however, soon effaced amid the constant whirl of dissipation in which I lived.

Among all the errors of my youth, I do not reckon it the least, that, during my short stay at Florence, I began to learn English under a very indifferent master, in place of endeavouring, from the example of those happy Tuscans, at least to make myself understood in their own divine language, which I mangled in the most barbarous manner every time I was obliged to employ it. Shame made me avoid speaking it as much as possible; but this feeling was not

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sufficiently powerful to overcome my indolence. I, however, corrected my pronunciation of our horrible U, *Lombard* or *French*, which had always displeased me by its meagre articulation, and by the little mouth made by the drawing in of the lips of those who pronounced it; and which may justly be termed the ridiculous grimace of monkeys. Even at present, after a five or six years residence in France, where my ears might have become accustomed to its sound, I can never restrain my risible faculty either in the theatre or the drawing-room, when I behold little lips drawn together in speaking, as if they were blowing over *boiling pottage*.

Losing my time at Florence, seeing little, learning still less, I soon became disgusted, and again teasing my old preceptor, we departed for Lucca on the first of December. The single day which we remained at Lucca appeared to me an age, and we accordingly set out for Pisa. Another day passed at this place seemed equally long, though I was much pleased with the *Campo-Santo*. From this place we departed for Leghorn.

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This city enchanted me not only from the slight resemblance it bears to Turin, but from a view of the sea, of which I never became tired. During a stay of eight or ten days which we made at this place, I continued to mangle the English language in the most shocking manner, at the same time that I shut my ears against the Tuscan. On afterwards endeavouring to investigate the cause of this foolish preference, I became convinced that it resulted from a mistaken self-love, of which I was not aware at the time. Having lived two or three years almost wholly among the English, having heard their power and riches every where celebrated; having contemplated their great political influence, and on the other hand viewing Italy wholly degraded from her rank as a nation, and the Italians, divided, weak, and enslaved, I was ashamed of being an Italian, and wished not to possess any thing in common with this nation.

From Leghorn we proceeded to Sienna, the scite of which I did not admire; but here a ray of light darted suddenly across

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my mind; my feelings were subdued by hearing the language of these people, which they spoke with elegance, clearness, and perfect precision. I remained however only twenty-four hours among them. The period of my literary and political conversion was yet far distant; and it was necessary that I should live for a long time at a distance from Italy, in order to know and appreciate the Italians.

I at length commenced with a beating heart my journey to Rome. I scarcely slept during the night, while in the day my imagination dwelt constantly on Saint Peter's, the Pantheon, &c. which I had heard so much extolled. I also reverted to some traits of Roman history, which I perfectly recollected, though without order, as it was the only history which I had voluntarily read in my youth.

It was in December, 1766, I do not recollect the day, that I at length beheld the gate *Del Popolo*. The sight of this superb entrance attracted my eyes, and consoled me for the painful feelings I had experienced on witnessing the misery and wretch-

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edness of the people of Viterbo. Scarcely had we alighted at the lodgings provided for us, than myself, and my two young companions, leaving our tutor to his repose, began to run through the city, and among other places visited the Pantheon. Those youths displayed even greater surprize than myself at what we saw; a circumstance which I could readily explain on, several years afterwards, visiting the countries of which they were natives. We remained only eight days at Rome, every moment of which were occupied in gratifying our eager curiosity. For myself, I experienced more gratification in repairing twice a-day to Saint Peter's than to view any other of the numerous novelties which presented themselves to our notice. I remarked that this admirable union of sublime objects did not at first make such a powerful impression on my mind as I expected; but my admiration continued to increase, though I only became fully sensible of the true value of so many wonders, when after being disgusted with the

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miserable display of ultramontane magnificence I arrived some years afterwards in order to take up my permanent abode in Rome.

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CHAPTER II.

Continuation of my Travels—I emancipate myself from the Controul of my Tutor.

WINTER approached, and I unceasingly importuned our preceptor to depart for Naples, where we intended to pass the carnival. We travelled in hired carriages. The roads between Rome and Naples were almost impassable, and my Valet Elias having broken his arm by a fall from his horse near Radicofani, we took him into our carriage, from the jolting of which he suffered much.

He displayed on the occurrence of his accident great fortitude and presence of mind. He rose without assistance, and led his horse by the bridle for about a mile to this village. While he waited for a surgeon, he caused the sleeve of his coat

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to be opened, and having found on inspection that his arm was really fractured, he placed the bones in a proper situation with his other hand, the injured arm being held by an assistant.

The surgeon, who entered the house nearly at the time we did, found the operation so well performed, that he did nothing but apply proper bandages to the fractured member, and in less than an hour we again set out accompanied in our carriage by the patient, who notwithstanding his sufferings uttered not a single complaint.

On arriving at Aquapendente we found the pole of our carriage was broken, which produced among us the greatest embarrassment. Elias, alone with his arm in a sling, and only three hours after the accident, gave so much assistance, and displayed so much activity, that the pole was very soon repaired, and we reached Naples without any other accident.

I take pleasure in recording this adventure, as it displays the character of a man possessing presence of mind and courage far superior to his condition in life. It gives me

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particular satisfaction to praise and admire these simple and natural qualities. Woe to those tyrannical and infamous governments who *neglect, fear,* or *stifle* them.

We arrived at Naples on the second day of Christmas. The entrance of Capodi-China by the street of Toledo exhibited this city to me under such a gay and pleasing aspect that it will never be effaced from my memory. But we were obliged to take up our lodgings at a very indifferent hotel, situated in one of the most gloomy and worst streets in the city, as all the best inns were already crowded with guests. This circumstance empoisoned the delight I felt in this charming city. The cheerful or gloomy situation of a house had always an irresistible influence on my weak head till I arrived at a much more advanced age.

A few days after I was introduced to several different families by the Sardinian minister. The carnival appeared to me more brilliant and agreeable than any thing of the same kind I ever witnessed at Turin not only on account of the public spectacles, but from the number of private entertain-

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ments, and the vast variety of exhibitions. In spite, however, of this constant whirl of dissipation, my being master of my own actions, notwithstanding I had plenty of money, was in the hey day of youth, and possessed a prepossessing figure, I yet felt every where satiety, ennui and disgust. My greatest pleasure consisted in attending the Opera buffa, though the gay and lively music left a deep and melancholy impression on my mind. A thousand gloomy and mournful ideas assailed my imagination, in which I delighted to indulge by wandering alone on the shores near the Chiaja and Portici. I had formed an acquaintance with several young Neapolitans, but without entertaining a friendship for any of them; my natural and evident backwardness prevented me from making the first advances, while it repressed every attempt at intimacy on the part of those with whom I associated. In my intercourse with the fair sex, for whom I always entertained a great predilection, the same backwardness kept me at a distance from those possessing gentleness and modesty of disposition, while my society was courted

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by the bold and forward; and thus I experienced a perpetual void in my heart; besides, the ardent passion I always intertained for visiting distant countries made me carefully shun the chains of love. At this period I avoided all its snares; I flew about the whole day in a light cabriolet in search of amusement; but from my extreme ignorance, I reaped neither profit nor pleasure from any of the objects I visited; I merely ran from place to place, because repose was insupportable to me. I was introduced at court, and though Ferdinand IV. was only between twelve and sixteen, I discovered a great resemblance in his manners to those of the three other sovereigns whom I had already seen, our old worthy monarch Charles Emanuel, the Duke of Modena, Governor of Milan, and Leopold Grand Duke of Tuscany, who was still extremely young. I had found the same resemblance in almost all the reigning princes, as well as in the fashions, habits, and manners of the different courts. During my abode at Naples, I began to intrigue anew, through the medium of the Sardinian

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minister, to obtain permission from the Court of Turin to leave my tutor, and continue my travels alone. Though I and my young companions lived in the utmost harmony, and though our old mentor never thwarted us; yet, as it was necessary to consult him respecting the choice of inns, and as he was always irresolute and changeable, we found this subjection insupportable. With this view I entreated our minister to write in my favour to Turin, to give testimony to my good conduct, and affirm that I was fully capable of conducting myself and of travelling alone. The affair succeeding to my wish, I felt a lively gratitude towards the minister, who, taking a warm interest in all my concerns, was the first who advised me to apply to the study of politics in order to fit me for entering the diplomatic line. This idea highly delighted me: I conceived that of all situations this was the most desirable. My ideas were for a long time directed towards it, without however applying myself to those studies necessary to qualify me for such an important station in the community.

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I was silent respecting my intentions, and conceiving that a regular and orderly behaviour was the only thing requisite in order to succeed in my designs, I assumed a sedateness of demeanor which was perhaps inconsistent with my years, and for which I was more indebted to instinct than to volition. I always possessed a certain gravity of manners, and something like regularity in every thing I undertook; even when I committed a fault, I was not unconscious of the cause.

Hitherto I was entirely unacquainted with my own powers; I conceived myself incapable of every thing; I had no decided partiality for any pursuit; obstinately cherishing the most gloomy and melancholy ideas, I never enjoyed a moment of tranquillity or repose. I was blindly led in every thing by an instinct, which I neither fully comprehended nor endeavoured to understand.

Several years after I became sensible that my unhappiness originated solely from the want or rather the necessity of having my heart occupied with a serious passion, and my mind bent on some ennobling and

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praise-worthy pursuit. When one of these resources failed me I became dissatisfied with every thing, and overwhelmed with the most insupportable chagrin and disgust.

Anxious to avail myself of my newly acquired independence, I proposed, on the termination of the carnival, to set out alone for Rome, as our old mentor, who waited as he said for letters from Flanders, declined fixing any precise period for our departure. But impatient to leave Naples and visit Rome, or to speak more truly, impatient to travel alone and as my own master more than three hundred miles from my natal prison, I refused any longer to defer my journey, and accordingly took leave of my companions. In this respect I had judged properly, for they remained at Naples during the whole of April, and did not reach Venice in time to witness the solemnity of the ascension, which I ardently longed to behold.

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CHAPTER III.

Continuation of my Travels—A Fit of Avarice.

My faithful Elias, who had preceded my arrival at Rome three days, had prepared for my reception a very handsome apartment at the foot of Mount Trinity, which soon consoled me for the filth of Naples. But I was still haunted with the same melancholy, ennui and restlessness; I was shamefully deficient in every useful or valuable acquisition, and my indifference for the beautiful and magnificent objects with which Rome abounds, daily augmented. I visited only three or four of them, and to these I habitually returned. I went every day to the house of the Count de Rivera, the Sardinian minister, a venerable old man, who gave me the best advice, and of whose

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society I never became weary, though he was extremely deaf. On happening to call one day, a beautiful Virgil in folio was lying on the table, open at the sixth book of the Æneid. On seeing me enter, the good old man made me a sign to approach, and began to recite aloud with the greatest enthusiasm the beautiful verses on Marcellus, with which almost every one is acquainted. As for me, who no longer understood them, though I had translated, explained, and recited them six years before, I felt so ashamed, and experienced such profound grief, that during several days I did nothing but reflect on my ignorance, and never more returned to the house of the count. But the torpor and indolence of my mind were such that it required something more than a transient regret to overcome them. But this beneficial shame passed away without leaving any trace, and during several years I neither read Virgil, nor any other work of merit whatever.

In this second visit to Rome, I was presented to that worthy old man, Pope Cle-

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ment XIII. His venerable and majestic appearance, and the magnificence of the palace of Monti Cavalla deprived me of all repugnance to the usual ceremony of prostration, though I had read the ecclesiastical history, and knew how to estimate this ridiculous formality.

It was now that I began my third little plot, through the medium of the Count de Rivera, to obtain permission from the *paternal court of Turin* to travel for another twelvemonth through France, England, and Holland, the very names of which made my youthful heart throb with delight. This little artifice again proved successful, and I found myself at liberty to roam through the world during the year 1768. A little difficulty however occurred which greatly afflicted me; my guardian with whom I had never reckoned, and who had never allowed me the whole of my revenues, when I had obtained this permission wrote me, that for the second year he would give me a letter of credit for fifteen hundred sequins, having only allowed me twelve hundred for the expences of my

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first journey. This niggardly declaration gave me much uneasiness, without, however discouraging me. I had heard that living was extremely expensive in these countries, and I thought it hard to be deprived of the means of appearing with respectability. But on the other hand, I durst not remonstrate with my avaricious guardian, lest I had been prevented from prosecuting my design. He would most probably have sounded in my ear the word *king*. He might have represented me to his majesty, who interferes in all the domestic concerns of the nobles, as a prodigal and a libertine, on which account I was anxious to avoid entering into a quarrel with him. But I determined in my own mind to save as much as possible of the twelve hundred sequins, in order to add to the fifteen hundred that were promised me.

Being thus restricted for the first time in regard to my expenditure, which had hitherto been sufficiently ample, I was seized with a fit of the most sordid avarice. It carried me so far, that I not only refrained from visiting the curio-

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sities of Rome, in order to avoid the expence of *drink-money;* but I even refused my faithful Elias what was requisite for his support. So niggardly did I become in this respect, that he was at length compelled to inform me that he would be obliged to leave my service and seek a livelihood elsewhere. Thus then I was forced, contrary to my inclination, to augment his allowance.

With my mind contracted, and bent on my favourite scheme of saving, I departed for Venice early in the month of May. My avarice led me to hire mules, though I detested the lagging pace of these miserable animals; however, as the difference in the expence between this mode of conveyance and travelling post was very considerable, I reluctantly submitted to it. Leaving therefore Elias and my other domestics to follow, I mounted my meagre rosinante, which, stumbling at every step, obliged me to pursue the greater part of my journey on foot. I thus proceeded, reckoning in a low voice on my fingers how much it would be possible to save during the ten

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or twelve days I should be on the road; how much during a month's abode at Venice, how much on my journey from Italy, and on this and that other occasion.

I engaged the muleteer the whole way to Bologna; but on arriving at Loretto, my lassitude was so intolerable, and my spirits so depressed, that I relinquished this detestible method of travelling. Thus my nacent avarice was effectually overcome by the impatience and ardour of my character. In spite of every consideration I paid the muleteer for the period I had agreed on, and relieved from an intolerable weight, with boyant spirits I posted the remainder of the journey. From this period my economy has been always untinctured with avarice.

I was now much less pleased with Bologna than on my former visit; my piety was no longer excited by the shrine of Loretto, and longing to behold Venice, respecting which I had heard so many wonders during my infancy, I reached Ferrara. I entered this city without recollecting that it was the birth-place, and contained the

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tomb of the divine Ariosto, whose poems I had perused with so much delight, and which were the first that were impressed on my memory. To my shame be it spoken a benumbing torpor took possession of my faculties, and my taste for literature daily declined; I acquired, however, without perceiving it, some knowledge of men and manners from the various scenes I daily witnessed.

I took my passage on board a packet termed the Courier of Venice, in which I met with a company of female dancers, one of whom was extremely beautiful.—This circumstance tended not, however, to render the voyage less tedious, which lasted two days and two nights before we reached Chiozzo; these nymphs acted the part of Susannas, and I could never tolerate assumed virtues.

On arriving at Venice its position filled me with delight and astonishment. I was even pleased with the jargon spoken in this city, because my ears had been accustomed to it in the comedies of Goldoni, which I had read in my infancy. This dialect is,

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in fact, rather agreeable, but it is wanting in dignity.

The crowd of foreigners, the number of public exhibitions, and the various entertainments of every kind which were this year given in honour of the Prince of Wirtemberg, joined to those which usually take place at the feast of the Ascension, detained me at Venice till the middle of June, though I did not reap much amusement in attending them. No sooner were their novelty over, than my habitual melancholy and ennui returned. I passed several days together in compleat solitude, never leaving the house, nor stirring from the window, whence I made signs to a young lady who lodged opposite, and with whom I occasionally exchanged a few words. During the rest of the day, which hung very heavy on my hands, I passed my time either in sleeping or in dreaming, I knew not which, and frequently in weeping without any apparent motive. I had lost my tranquillity, and I was unable even to divine what had deprived me of it. A few years afterwards, on investigating the cause of this occur-

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rence, I discovered that it proceeded from a malady which attacked me every spring, sometimes in April, and sometimes in June; its duration was longer or shorter, and its violence very different, according as my mind was occupied.

I likewise experienced that my intellectual faculties resembled a barometer, and that I possessed more or less talent for composition in proportion to the weight of the atmosphere. During the prevalence of the solstitial and equinoctial winds, I was always remarkably stupid, and uniformly evinced less penetration in the evening than the morning. I likewise perceived that the force of my imagination, the ardour of enthusiasm, and capability of invention, were possessed by me in a higher degree in the middle of winter or in the middle of summer, than during the intermediate periods. This materiality, which I believe to be common to all men of a delicate nervous system, has greatly contributed to lessen the pride with which the good I have done might have inspired me, in like manner as it has tended to diminish the shame

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I might have felt for the errors I have committed, particularly in my own art. In short, I am fully convinced that during the periods of which I now speak, it was beyond my power to produce any thing great or excellent.

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CHAPTER IV.

Termination of my Travels in Italy, and my Arrival for the first time in Paris.

My stay at Venice was altogether productive of little satisfaction. I did not visit a tenth part of the master-pieces of painting, sculpture, and architecture, which every where abound in this city. I confess too, with shame, that I did not even take a view of the arsenal. I paid not the least attention to the government, which differs from all others; if we cannot praise it for being the most excellent, it may at least be regarded as singular, having continued to exist during so many centuries in the greatest prosperity and tranquillity. A stranger to the fine arts, I vegetated in the

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most shameful indolence. At last I set out from Venice, and as usual felt more pleasure in leaving than in entering the city. I proceeded to Padua, which on the whole I beheld with little interest; I did not introduce myself to any one of its celebrated professors, whose friendship I was so anxious to cultivate in after-life; but at that period the very name of a professor, study, or an university, filled me with dismay. I knew not even that a few miles distant from Padua reposed the ashes of our immortal Petrarch; but what had I to do with Petrarch, I who had never either read his works, or comprehended, or perceived their beauties; I who had thoughtlessly thrown them aside when they accidentally fell into my hands. Constantly oppressed by tedium and indolence we rapidly passed through Vicenza, Verona, Mantua, and Milan, in our way to Genoa, a city which I had a few years before seen, and which had left in my mind a strong desire to re-visit it.

I carried with me many letters of introduction to persons residing in the different countries through which we travelled, but

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I seldom took the trouble to deliver them. When I did present them at the houses of the persons to whom they were addressed, I seldom called again, though they themselves took infinite trouble to find me out, in which, however, they never almost succeeded. This conduct partly proceeded from a certain inherent pride and inflexibility of character, and partly from an almost invincible antipathy to new acquaintances; a disposition wholly irreconcilable with my mania for incessant travelling. Strange contradiction! I longed to be with the same persons, and to find them in different places! I soon also became weary of Genoa, in which at that time there was no Sardinian ambassador, and where I knew no one except my banker. I had determined to take my departure toward the end of June, when one day this banker, who was quite a man of the world, paid me a visit. He found me alone, abstracted and melancholy; he inquired how I occupied myself, and having discovered that I had no books, and little knowledge, and that I spent much of my time in gazing from my windows and rum-

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ning through the streets of Genoa, or in aquatic excursions, he took pity on my youth, and insisted on my accompanying him to the residence of one of his friends. The name of this friend was the Chevalier Charles Negroni. He had spent a part of his life at Paris, and observing that I had an anxious desire to visit that celebrated city, spoke much on the subject. What he said relative to this city appeared to me exaggerated, till I arrived there a few months afterwards. This noble and worthy man introduced me to the best society in Genoa, and at the splendid festival given by the new Doge on his election he attended me as a guide and companion. It was at this time that I had nearly fallen in love with a beautiful and amiable female who appeared disposed to return my passion. But my rage for travelling, and my wish to leave Italy, rescued me from the fetters with which love threatened to enchain me.

Having taken my passage in a small felucca for Antibes, it seemed in my eyes as if I were about to make a voyage to the Indies. In my maritime excursions hither-

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to I had never been above a few miles out at sea. A fresh breeze sprung up, and soon carried us to a considerable distance from the shore; but as this soon changed into a squall, we were obliged to steer for Savona, where we remained for two days waiting the return of favourable weather. My spirits were so much affected by this delay, that I never left my chamber, not even to visit the celebrated Virgin of Savona; I neither wished to see any more of Italy, nor to hear it again spoken of. During my stay I was wholly absorbed in the contemplation of the pleasures I expected to realize on my arrival in France. My hyperbolical imagination always magnifies distant good and evil so much in my eyes, that when I experience either the one or the other, but particularly the former, the effect is destroyed.

On landing at Antibes, every thing I beheld being new, afforded me a subject of delight; for though many of these objects were inferior to others I had seen, yet their variety excited in my mind the most pleasurable sensations. I set out immediately

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for Toulon, the appearance of which afforded me little gratification, and where I saw nothing worthy of notice. From thence I proceeded to Marseilles; its fine port, regular and well laid out streets, but especially the number of beautiful and lively women it contained, rendered it particularly attractive in my eyes. In order to avoid travelling during the continuance of the great heats, I determined to take up my abode in it for one month. The landlord of the inn where I resided kept an excellent ordinary; and as this was frequented by a numerous company, I was under no necessity of speaking, which always cost me a painful effort: my taciturnity, the effect of a timidity I could never wholly vanquish, was redoubled by the incessant babbling of the French officers and merchants who resorted to this table in great numbers. From my disposition of mind it was impossible I could ever associate with any of them, either on a friendly or intimate footing. I attended willingly to their conversation, but without deriving any advantage from it; but I always listened without an effort to

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the discourse of fools, because we learn from them what they tell us not.

My journey to France was chiefly undertaken with a view to become acquainted with the French theatre. Two years previous to this period I had fallen in with a party of French comedians, and assiduously attended them during the whole summer. In this way I had become acquainted with many of their principal tragedies, and with most of their celebrated comedies. Neither however while in Piedmont, nor during my first or second journey to France, did it enter into my head that I should ever entertain a desire or possess any talent for dramatic composition. I listened indeed attentively to the productions of others, but without any attempt to imitate them, or any indication that I myself should become a dramatic author. On the whole, though naturally less inclined to laugh than to mourn, I felt a greater predilection for comedy than tragedy. When afterwards reflecting on this subject, I became convinced that one of the principal causes of my indifference for tragedy was that in

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most of the French pieces, whole scenes, nay, even acts, are filled with subordinate characters, which by unnecessarily interrupting the main plot, destroyed the effect of the whole on my mind. Besides my ears, though I wished not to be an Italian, were disgusted with the monotonous and insipid uniformity of their stately rhymes, and their disagreeable nasal terminations. Hence, without knowing why, though the actors were superior to ours, though the pieces were excellent, and depicted the emotions and passions in an admirable manner, yet I felt occasionally the most freezing indifference, and departed very little satisfied with their performance. The tragedies from which I derived the greatest gratification were Alzira, Mahomet, and a few others.

After the performance, one of my amusements at Marseilles was to bathe every evening in the sea. I was induced to indulge myself in this luxury in consequence of finding a very agreeable spot, on a tongue of land lying to the right of the harbour, where, seated on the sand, with my back leaning against a rock, I could behold the

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sea and sky without interruption. In the contemplation of these objects, embellished by the rays of the setting sun, I passed my time dreaming of future delights. There I might unquestionable have become a poet, could I have given language to my thoughts and feelings.

The indolent man, or he who is not occupied in some useful pursuit, soon becomes disgusted with every thing. So it was with me on the present occasion. I soon became weary of Marseilles. Haunted by a desire of seeing Paris, I left Marseilles on the 10th of August, rather like one wishing to fly from himself than as a traveller. I posted day and night without stopping till I reached Lyons. With my mind intently fixed on Paris, neither Aix, with its magnificent and delightful public walks, nor Avignon, celebrated for containing the tomb of Laura; nor Vaucluse, which had so long been the abode of the immortal Petrarch, could turn me aside from my purpose. Through fatigue, I was compelled to stop forty-eight hours at Lyons; but no

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sooner was my strength recruited, than I again hurried on, and arrived in less than three days at Paris, by the way of Bourgogne.

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CHAPTER V.

My First Visit to Paris.

It was on a cold, cloudy, and rainy morning, between the 15th and 20th of August, that I entered Paris, by the wretched suburb of Saint Marceau. Accustomed to the clear and serene sky of Italy and Provence, I felt much surprised at the thick fog which enveloped the city, especially at this season. Never in my life did I experience more disagreeable feelings than on entering the damp and dirty suburb of Saint Germain, where I was to take up my lodging. What inconsiderate haste, what mad folly had led me into this sink of filth and nastiness! On entering the inn I felt myself thoroughly undeceived, and I should certainly have set off again immediately had

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not shame and fatigue withheld me. My illusions were still farther dissipated when I begun to ramble through Paris. The mean and wretched buildings, the contemptible ostentation displayed in a few houses dignified with the pompous appellation of hotels and palaces, the filthiness of the Gothic churches, the truly Vandal like construction of the public theatres at that time, besides innumerable other disagreeable objects, of which not the least disgusting to me was the plastered countenances of many very ugly women, far outweighed in my mind the beauty and elegance of the public walks and gardens, the infinite variety of fine carriages, the lofty façade of the Louvre, as well as the number of spectacles and entertainments of every kind.

The weather still continued gloomy and unfavourable, and for nearly fifteen days, during which I remained at Paris, I never once beheld the splendid orb of day. The state of the atmosphere had always a considerable influence on my mental faculties. Hence, perhaps, it is, that the impression made on my mind during my abode in

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Paris remains so indelibly engraven on my imagination, that even now, at the distance of twenty-three years, I think I still experience it, notwithstanding my reason combats, and in part condemns it.

The court had removed to Compiegne, where it intended to remain during the month of September. The Sardinian minister, for whom I had letters, not being at Paris, I knew not a single soul excepting some foreigners whom I had become acquainted with in Italy; and who like myself were unknown to any person of distinction. Ever tormented by the demon of melancholy, I spent most of my time in the public walks, attending theatrical amusements, and in the company of women. Our ambassador did not return from Fontainbleau to Paris till towards the close of November; by him I was introduced to various families, and particularly to those of the foreign ministers. It was at the house of the Spanish ambassador where I was first induced to play at faro. Though I neither won nor lost, I soon grew weary of this as well as every other amusement,

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and resolved to depart in the month of January for London.

Satiated with Paris, though in truth I was scarcely acquainted with the streets, my anxiety to visit new scenes was greatly abated. I found those I had hitherto beheld not only fall far beneath the picture I had drawn of them in imagination, but also beneath those I had seen in Italy.

It was in London then that I was at length taught to know and appreciate Naples, Rome, Venice, and Florence.

Before departing for England, our ambassador proposed to present me at the Court of Versailles. An anxious wish to see a court generally esteemed superior in splendor to any other, induced me to accept his proposal. The first of January, 1768, was the day fixed on for this purpose. I had been informed that the king never deigned to address any but the most celebrated foreigners; I could not, however, reconcile myself to the haughty and unbending mien of Lewis XV. He received with a cold and supercilious air those who were presented to him, surveying them

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from head to foot. It seemed as if on presenting a dwarf to a giant he should view him smiling, or perhaps say:—"Ah! the little animal!" or if he remained silent, his air and manner would express the same derision. Such contempt soon ceased however to afflict me, when a few moments afterward I observed his majesty receive other foreigners of much higher rank than myself in the same manner. After a short prayer the king took the road to the chapel, near the door of which the mayor and municipality of Paris advancing, stammered out the usual compliments of the season. The taciturn monarch replied by a slight inclination of his head, and turning to one of his courtiers, inquired what had become of the sheriffs who usually attended the mayor on such occasions, when a voice exclaimed from among the crowd, *they have stuck fast in the mud;* on which all the court laughed, and the monarch himself even smiled.

Such is the unsteadiness of fortune, that nearly twenty years afterwards I beheld another Lewis receive much more graciously

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a very different compliment made to him by another mayor on the seventeenth of July, 1789. It was then the courtiers themselves who *stuck fast in the mud*, on coming from Versailles to Paris. Perhaps I might return thanks to heaven for having been an eye witness of this spectacle, were I not fully convinced that the reign of *le peuple souverain* will ultimately prove more ruinous to France and to the world at large than that of the *Capets*.

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CHAPTER VI.

I visit England and Holland—My first amours.

I left Paris about the middle of January, with a countryman of my own, a young man of genius, of a prepossessing figure, and who was considerably older than myself. In other respects, he was equally ignorant as I, still less given to reflection, and fonder of mixing in society than to study and observe mankind.

He was the cousin to our ambassador at Paris, and nephew of Prince Masserano, Spanish ambassador at the court of London. It was previously settled that we should take up our residence at the house of this nobleman. I was not over partial to travelling companions, but as we were both

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going to one place, I readily reconciled myself to his society.

My new comrade was extremely lively and loquacious; and we had the mutual satisfaction, I of listening and holding my tongue, he of declaiming and extolling himself. He was extremely vain of his person, having been a great favourite with the ladies; and he recounted with a grave air his good fortune, which I heard without the smallest envy. During the evening when we went to inns, while waiting supper we usually played at chess, in which he always came off conqueror, for I never entered into the spirit of the game. On repairing to Calais, we took the road by Lisle Douai, and St. Omer. The cold was so intense, that one night, though we travelled with the blinds up, and took other precautions, both our bread and wine were frozen. I rejoiced at this excessive cold, for I always love extremes.

On leaving the French coast, the cold became much less intense, and no snow fell during our journey from Dover to London. England, and especially the metropolis,

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highly delighted me at first sight. The roads, the inns, the horses, the females, the absence of mendicity, the neatness and convenience of the houses, the incessant bustle in the suburbs as well as in the capital, all conspired to fill my mind with delight. In my future journeys to England I never found any reason to change this favourable opinion.

At London it is more easy to procure introductions to the houses of private families than at Paris. Induced by this circumstance, and the influence of my travelling companion, I plunged into dissipation. In general I am little solicitous to overcome obstacles, when I expect no benefit to result from it. The truly paternal benevolence of Prince de Masserano tended greatly to give a new turn to my character.

This worthy old man was much attached to the Piedmontese, being a native of Piedmont, though his father had afterwards settled in Spain. Perceiving after a residence of three months that I made no progress in knowledge, and becoming disgusted with assemblies, balls, and routs,

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I determined no longer to play the *lord* in the drawing-room, but the *coachman* at the gate.

Much to his delight, I frequently drove my companion through the streets of London, leaving to him all the glory of gallantry, while I acquitted myself in my new character of coachman with so much skill and address that even in the collision of coach-poles so common at Ranelagh and other places of public amusement, I generally came off with honour, and without my horses suffering the least injury. My amusements through the course of the winter consisted in being on horseback during five or six hours every morning, and in being seated on the coach-box for two or three hours every evening, whatever might be the state of the weather. During the month of April, my companion and I travelled through some of the richest counties of England. In this excursion we visited Portsmouth, Salisbury, Bath, Bristol, and returned by the way of Oxford to London. The country then so much enchanted me that I determined to settle in it,

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not that I was much attached to any individual, but because I was delighted with the scenery, the simple manners of the inhabitants, the modesty and beauty of the women, and above all with the enjoyment of political liberty — all which made me overlook its mutable climate, the melancholy almost inseparable from it, and the exorbitant price of all the necessaries of life. On returning from this tour, which still farther augmented my inclination to roam, I again felt myself urged by the mania of travelling to visit new scenes; it gave me much pain therefore to be obliged to defer my voyage to Holland till the month of June. I embarked at Harwich for Helvoetsluys, which, favoured by a fortunate breeze, I reached in twelve hours.

Holland during the summer season exhibits a cheerful and smiling aspect, but it would have pleased me still more had I not previously visited England; for, however much we may admire its population and riches, its wise laws, the industry and activity of its inhabitants, yet in all

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of these it is exceeded by England. In fact, after much travelling and observation, the only two countries of Europe in which I have uniformly wished to fix my residence are England and Italy; because in the former art has every where changed and subjugated nature; and because in the latter nature always appears predominant, and in its pristine force and vigour.

During my stay at the Hague, which was protracted beyond what I had intended, I fell into the snares which love had so often spread in vain to entrap me. It was a young married, beautiful, and highly accomplished female who inspired me with this attachment. From the circumscribed range of the country, and the paucity of amusements, I saw her more frequently than I at first wished; but ere long I experienced uneasiness when deprived even for a short time of her company. I became so violently enamoured that I determined not quit the Hague, being fully persuaded that it would be utterly impossible to enjoy life without her society. While thus as-

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sailed with the shafts of love, my heart was not insensible to the soothing influence of friendship.

The name of my new friend was Joseph d'Acunha, the Portuguese envoy at the Hague. In him were united to much originality of character a well informed mind and great elevation of sentiment. A mutual taciturnity and sympathy of character insensibly operated to unite us in the bonds of friendship. This union was still farther cemented by reciprocal candour and frankness. Hence I was extremely happy at the Hague, where for the first time in my life the society of my friend and my mistress, who, repaying my affection, left me nothing farther to desire. I incessantly spoke of my mistress to my friend, and of my friend to my mistress. I drank deep draughts from the fountain of pleasure, to which I had hitherto been a stranger, but of which my heart felt a confused want. The excellent advice given me by my worthy friend will never be erased from my memory. He it was who first made me

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blush at my indolent and absurd mode of life, at my dislike to reading, and at my utter want of acquaintance with the works of our best authors in prose and verse, as well as with the productions of our most celebrated philosophers. He mentioned in particular the immortal Machiavel, whom I knew only by name. Biassed by the prejudices of education, we too readily give credit to the calumnies propagated by his detractors, who have frequently neither read nor comprehended him. My friend d'Acunha presented me with a copy of his works, which I still preserve, and on which I have at different times written marginal notes. What seemed to me then very extraordinary was that a desire for study never took possession of my mind, nor did my ideas begin to unfold themselves till I became occupied with the passion of love. This passion at once deprived me of the means of applying myself, and stimulated me to proceed. Never did I find myself in a more suitable state for the composition of any literary work than when I

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was actuated by the desire of presenting my productions to her who inspired me with this omnipotent passion.

My happiness in Holland was not of long duration. The husband of the lady whom I adored was a wealthy individual, whose father had been governor of Batavia. He had lately purchased a baronial domain in Swisserland, whither he meant to remove to spend the autumn. During the month of August he went to Spa in company with his wife. As he was not of a jealous temper I followed them, and accompanied them on their return to Maestrich, where I was under the necessity of bidding her adieu, since she meant to reside in the country with her mother while he passed into Swisserland. I could form no decent or plausible pretext to attend her, being wholly unacquainted with her mother. This separation occasioned me much sorrow, though it was greatly alleviated by the reviving hope of again beholding her. In fact, as soon as the husband had set off for Swisserland, she returned to the Hague, where I again met her. My joy was excessive, but prov-

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ed very transient. I visited her daily, and believed myself the happiest of mortals. As she could not assume the resolution to inform me of the day of her departure, and as I equally feared myself to make any inquiry respecting it, the intelligence first reached me through my friend d'Acunha, who, putting a small billet into my hands, acquainted me she had been forced to quit the Hague. This billet affected me much, though it contained many expressions which tended to sooth my affliction for his loss. She candidly confessed that imperious circumstances required her immediately to rejoin her husband, and that she could no longer defer her departure without injury to her honour and reputation. My friend afforded me all the consolation in his power, and exhorted me to listen to reason since there was no remedy.

I should never obtain credit, were I to recount all the follies I committed on this occasion. While, however, I absolutely implored death to come to my aid, I said not a word to any one. I feigned sickness in order to induce my friend to leave me to

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myself, and called in a surgeon, who took away some blood from my arm. No sooner had he quitted my chamber than I pretended to fall asleep, and closing my bed curtains, mused for a few minutes on what I should do. I then loosened the bandage from my arm, that I might die by loss of blood. But my faithful and intelligent Elias had seen my phrenzy, and been instructed before his departure to watch my conduct narrowly. With this view, pretending to believe that I had called him, he approached my bedside, and suddenly opened the curtains. Equally surprised and abashed, at the same time perhaps even repenting of my folly, or at least not fully determined in my resolution, I told him that the bandage round my arm had become loose. Feigning to believe me, he immediately replaced it, but never again left me to myself. As soon as my friend was informed by him of my situation, he visited me without delay, and forced me to quit my bed. He had me immediately conveyed to his house, where I continued several days, during which he never left me

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alone. I became dull and pensive, but whether from shame or diffidence, I concealed my inward grief. I neither spoke nor wept. The influence of time, however, and the sage counsels of my friend, together with the various amusements in which he compelled me to participate, and a ray of hope that I should once again behold the mistress of my heart on her return to Holland, but above all perhaps, the volatility of temper natural to nineteen, tended gradually to assuage my sorrow. My mind remained long a prey to grief, but reason at length became triumphant. As soon as the anguish of my mind began to abate, though it still rankled in my bosom, I formed the resolution of returning to Italy, finding it altogether insupportable to remain in a country where every thing tended to recall to my mind the transient happiness I had enjoyed. I found it however extremely difficult to tear myself from my new friend, though he himself urged me to persevere in my resolution, being fully persuaded that travelling and new objects, distance and time, would eventually operate my cure.

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I left Utrecht about the middle of September, and took the road to Brussels. I proceeded through Lorrain, Alsace, Swisserland, and Savoy, without stopping, unless to sleep. On my arrival in Piedmont, I directed my course to Cumiana, my sister's country residence. From thence I went to Suza, without passing through Turin, as I wished to avoid all intercourse with mankind, for I perceived that to my cure retirement was absolutely indispensible. During this journey, of all the cities through which I passed, as Nanci, Strasburg, Basle, and Geneva, I beheld only the walls. I never once opened my mouth to speak to my faithful Elias. I spoke to him only by signs; while he, to conform himself to my humour, obeyed me, and silently anticipated all my wants.

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CHAPTER VII.

Return to my Native Country—Commencement of Philosophical Studies.

I REMAINED six weeks in the country with my sister, and afterwards accompanied her on her return to Turin. From my great increase of growth during the last two years none of my acquaintances recognized me. The idle and roving life I led had produced the most beneficial effects on my health. On passing through Geneva I purchased a parcel of books, among which were the works of Rousseau, Montesquieu, Helvetius, and others. Scarcely had I returned home, with my heart filled with melancholy and love, than I perceived the necessity of occupying my mind with some

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species of study. But to what could I apply it—a neglected education, followed by six years of dissipation and total idleness, had wholly unfitted me for serious application. Being undetermined whether to remain at home or recommence my travels, I domesticated myself in my sister's house during the winter, wholly relinquishing society, and passing my days in reading and walking. I perused only French works, and among others began the Heloise of Rousseau several times; but though possessing very warm and ardent feelings, I found it so much laboured, and abounding with an affectation of sentiment foreign to the heart, that I could never finish the first volume. I did not understand the political works of this author, and left them behind me. The prose works of Voltaire gave me the greatest pleasure, but his poetry did not suit my taste. I never read the whole of the Henriade, and only a few detached passages of his Pucelle, as every thing that is obscene fills me with disgust. Some of his tragedies I also perused about the same time. Montesquieu I read twice from beginning

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to end with a mingled sentiment of pleasure and surprise, and perhaps also with some profit. L'Esprit d'Helvetius left a profound but disagreeable impression on my mind; but the book of all others which gave me the most delight, and beguiled many of the tedious hours of winter, was Plutarch. I perused five or six times the lives of Timoleon, Cæsar, Brutus, Pelopidas, and some others. I wept, raved, and fell into such a transport of fury, that if any one had been in the adjoining chamber they must have pronounced me out of my senses. Every time that I came to any of the great actions of these celebrated individuals, my agitation was so extreme that I could not remain seated. I was like one beside himself, and shed tears of mingled grief and rage at having been born at Piedmont, and at a period, and under a government where it was impossible to conceive or execute any great design.

During this winter I studied with the greatest ardour the planetary system, and the laws which regulate the celestial bodies. I pushed my studies as far as it was

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possible without the aid of geometry, with which I was wholly unacquainted, or in other words, I found myself incompetent to master the historical part of astronomy, which is purely mathematical. Notwithstanding my gross ignorance in this respect, I comprehended enough of this divine science to elevate my mind to the immensity of the university. No study could have been better calculated than this to occupy and sooth my mind if I had possessed the necessary knowledge to prosecute it. While engaged in this praise-worthy pursuit, which however increased my taciturnity, and augmented my melancholy and disgust for every common amusement, I was unceasingly importuned by my brother-in-law to enter into the married state. I was naturally attached to a domestic life; but after having visited England at nineteen, and read Plutarch with the greatest interest at twenty years of age, I experienced the most insufferable repugnance at marrying and having my children born at Turin. With a fickleness however natural to my years, I at length consented that my brother-in-law

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should negociate a marriage for me with the rich young heiress of a respectable family. This lady was rather handsome, and her black eyes would doubtless have made me forget *Plutarch*, in like manner as *Plutarch* had diminished my attachment to the fair Hollander. I must here avow to my shame that at this period I was more influenced by a desire for riches than beauty. I calculated that by this union my fortune would receive a great augmentation, and that I should be thus enabled to cut, as the world term it, a brilliant figure; but my happy destiny over-ruled my weak judgment.

The lady, after evincing a marked predilection for me, was deterred from her purpose by one of her aunts, who favoured the addresses of a young gentleman, whose family was indeed less affluent than my own, but who had a number of rich relatives, and besides, stood in high favour at court. He had been one of the pages to the Duke of Savoy, the presumptive heir to the crown, who afterwards conferred on him many benefits. He displayed mild and agreeable manners, and possessed an excellent cha-

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racter, while I on the contrary was regarded as a singular being, who did not bend his judgment to the slavish opinions of the age, and who, instead of concealing his sentiments, openly ridiculed the usages and customs of his country; an offence never to be forgiven. Hence my rival obtained the preference. This choice was extremely fortunate for the young lady, as she led a happy life with the family into which she entered. It was equally fortunate for me, since had I burdened myself with a wife and family I must have taken an everlasting farewel of the muses. This refusal was at once a subject of pain and consolation to me. While the affair was in agitation I frequently felt regret, and a kind of shame I durst not avow. I blushed at the consciousness of being influenced in this instance by the consideration of riches, and of acting in opposition to my usual way of thinking; but one act of weakness produces a second, which in like manner brings others in its train. One of the motives for this absurd cupidity was the project I had formed, during my stay at Naples, of devoting myself

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to the diplomatic line, to succeed in which I deemed the possession of wealth indispensible. In this design I was still farther encouraged to proceed by the advice of my brother-in-law, an old courtier. Happily on my failure in this matrimonial union I resigned every idea of entering into the diplomatic corps. I never solicited any official situation, and thank heaven my foolish project was never communicated to any one but my brother-in-law.

Foiled in my two projects, I resolved to continue my travels. I had settled all pecuniary concerns with my guardian, from whose power I immediately emancipated myself on attaining my twenty-first year. Being now fully acquainted with the state of my own affairs, I found myself much more at ease than my guardian would have made me believe. In this respect he rendered me an essential service, by accustoming me to regulate and restrain my wants; it also imbued my mind with a love of order and regularity from which I have never deviated. Finding myself in possession of a yearly income of 2,500 sequins, besides

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a large sum of ready money accumulated during the period of my minority, I deemed myself sufficiently rich for a bachelor, especially in my country. Having therefore abandoned every dea of augmenting my fortune, I prepared for the re-commencement of my travels on a more liberal scale of expence than formerly.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Second Journey into Germany, Denmark, and Sweden.

After having obtained the necessary permission from the king, I departed for Vienna in the month of May, 1769. I left to my faithful Elias the trouble of regulating our expences, and began seriously to reflect on men and manners. To the chagrin, indolence, and a physical desire for change, which actuated me during my first travels, had now succeeded a certain pleasing melancholy which led to reflection. This partly resulted from the influence of love, and partly from the works I had perused during the last six months. The Essais de Montaigne proved to me of the

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greatest utility; and it is to them perhaps that I owe the little capability of thinking which I possessed at an after period of my life. This work in ten small volumes became my constant travelling companion; and I derived from it both instruction and pleasure. It flattered even my ignorance and idleness, because I opened by chance any volume, and after reading a page or two again closed it, and passed whole hours in reflecting on what I had read. I was also ashamed to meet Latin quotations both in prose and verse in almost every page, which I could not understand without having recourse to the translations in the notes, which I was foolish enough to do, without even an attempt to understand the original; but what was still worse, I skipped over the extracts from our most celebrated Italian poets without an effort to comprehend them. Hence it may be easily conceived how great was my ignorance, and that it became every day more difficult for me to express myself in our divine language.

I arrived at Vienna by the way of Milan and Venice, two cities which I had a

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strong desire to re-visit, after which I proceeded to Trent, Inspruck, Ausburg, and Munich, where I stopped only a short time. I found Vienna nearly as small as Turin, without being so advantageously situated. Here I remained during all the summer in a state of complete idleness. In July I set out on an excursion as far as Buda, in order to view part of Hungary. Having again become extremely idle, I fled to company as a relief, taking care however to secure my heart against the approaches of love. With this view I employed the remedy recommended by Cato under similar circumstances. I might easily, during my stay at Vienna, have been introduced to the celebrated poet Metastasio, at whose house our minister, the old and respectable Count Canale, passed his evenings in a select company of men of letters, whose chief amusement consisted in reading portions from the Greek, Latin, and Italian classics. Having taken an affection for me, he wished, out of pity to my idleness, to conduct me thither. But I declined accompanying him, either from my usual aukwardness,

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or from the contempt which the constant habit of reading French works had given me for Italian productions. Hence I concluded that this assemblage of men of letters with their classics could be only a dismal company of pedants. Besides, I had seen Metastasio, in the gardens of Schoenbrunn, perform the customary genuflexion to Maria Theresa in such a servile and adulatory manner, that I, who had my head stuffed with Plutarch, and who embellished every theory, could not think of binding myself either by the ties of familiarity or friendship, with a poet who had sold himself to a despotism which I so cordially detested. My rude and eccentric notions uniting themselves to the passions of twenty, rendered my character altogether original, and even ridiculous.

In the month of September I continued my journey through Prague and Dresden, where I remained a month. From thence I went to Berlin, and in this city took up my abode for an equal length of time. On entering the states of the great Frederic, which appeared to me like a vast guard-

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house, my horror against this man of blood redoubled. On being presented to his majesty, I experienced not the slightest emotion either of surprise or respect; but on the contrary, a rising feeling of indignation, which became daily strengthened in my mind on beholding oppression and despotism assuming the mask of virtue. Count de Finch, who introduced me to the royal presence, inquired why, as I was in the service of my sovereign, I did not wear my uniform, to which I replied, I thought the court was already sufficiently crowded with uniforms. The king addressed to me the few words customary on such occasions. I regarded him with the greatest attention, fixing my eyes respectfully on his, while I mentally thanked heaven I was not born his slave. Towards the middle of November, I departed from this Prussian encampment, which I regarded with detestation and horror.

After remaining three days at Hamburgh I proceeded to Denmark, and reached Copenhagen in the beginning of December. This country was not only agreeable to me,

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from its resemblance to Holland, but from a certain air of activity, commerce, and industry, which is never to be found under an absolute monarchy. In fact, the general welfare and prosperity of any country affords the best eulogium on its government. None of the elements however of social happiness is to be found in the states of Frederic the Great, though he *commands* letters, arts, and industry, to flourish under his protection. I preferred Copenhagen and Denmark, because they differed from Berlin and Prussia; a country which of all others left the most painful and disagreeable impression on my mind, though I beheld in it, especially in the capital, many architectural and other objects worthy of attention; but even at present, after the lapse of so many years, I cannot recall the idea of this nation of soldiers without experiencing the same indignation I felt on first entering it.

During the winter I began to stammer the Italian with Count Catanti, the Neapolitan envoy at the Danish court. The count was brother-in-law to the celebrated prime minister of Naples, Marquis Ta-

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nucci, formerly a professor in the university of Pisa. I became better pleased with the Tuscan language and pronunciation on comparing it with the hissing, nasal, and guttural sound of the Danish, to which I was daily compelled to listen, happily however without understanding it. Though greatly deficient in point of elegance and precision, a merit which the natives of Tuscany possess in an eminent degree, my pronunciation of the Italian was nevertheless pure and perfectly Tuscan. As my ears were wounded by any deviation in this respect, I had accustomed myself to pronounce as well as possible the *u*, *z*, *gi*, *ci*, and other *Tuscanisms*. Count Catanti urged me no longer to neglect this beautiful language, and I was the more inclined to profit by his advice, as no consideration would have induced me to pass for a native of France. I began then to read Italian works, and among others the Dialogues of Arêtin, which disgusted me by their obscenity, though I was charmed with the copiousness and elegance of the diction. I thus amused myself with reading, being

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confined to my chamber and frequently to my bed during the greatest part of the winter, in consequence of different indispositions with which I was attacked by too anxiously endeavouring to escape from the dominion of sentimental love. I perused for the third and fourth time my favourite Plutarch, without however relinquishing Montaigne, so that my head was at once filled with a medley of philosophy, politics, and libertinism. When my health permitted me to go abroad, my greatest amusement in this northern climate was driving a sledge with inconceivable velocity; an exercise which soothed and gratified my ardent imagination.

Towards the end of March I set out for Sweden, though the Sound was not frozen, and Scania not yet covered with snow. As soon as I had passed the village of Norkoping, I found the winter set in anew with great rigour. From the heaps of snow, and from the accumulation of ice in the lakes, I was obliged to relinquish my carriage, and pursue the remainder of my journey to Stockholm in sledges. The no-

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velty of this spectacle, the majestic and wild aspect of the immense forests, lakes, and precipices, filled my mind with wonder and delight. Though I had never read Ossian, yet I perceived many of those rural images rising in my mind which I afterwards discovered in the beautiful verses of our celebrated Cezarotti.

I was much pleased not only with the aspect of Sweden, but with the manners of all classes of the inhabitants, either because I loved extremes, or for reasons which I am unable to explain. The mixed form of the Swedish government, through which appears some dawnings of liberty, induced me to enter upon the study of it; but utterly incapable of serious and continued application, I could not persevere sufficiently to render myself master of the subject. I understood enough, however, to perceive that the poverty of the four classes who possess the right of voting, and the extreme corruption of the nobles and citizens who were influenced by the gold of France or Russia, rendered it impossible that any concord could subsist among the

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different orders of the state, and annihilated every idea of just and rational liberty. I continued to amuse myself with making excursions in their sledges into the gloomy forests, and immense frozen lakes, till the 20th of April, at which period the thaw was so instantaneous, from the influence of the sun and the wind from the sea, that in four days scarce a vestige remained of the accumulated snows of winter. These were succeeded by the most beautiful verdure, which produced a surprising and truly romantic effect.

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CHAPTER IX.

Continuation of my Travels in Russia, Prussia, Holland, and England.

My restless temper induced me to quit Stockholm, though I was highly pleased with it, about the middle of May, in order to pursue my route through Finland to Petersburg. I made an excursion as far as the celebrated university of Upsal, and in my progress visited different iron mines; but as I neither examined with sufficient attention the curiosities they contained, nor took notes of what I saw, I must be silent on this head. When I reached Grisselhamn, a small port in Sweden, situated on its eastern coast, opposite the Gulph of Bothnia, winter, which I seemed as it were to

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pursue, had already commenced. The sea was already in a great measure frozen, and the passage to the first of the five small islands, lying at the entrance of the Gulph, was rendered impassable for small craft of every kind. No alternative was therefore left us but to remain three days in this dreary abode, till fresh breezes should spring up, and dissolve the thick crust of ice, which separated with great noise, forming large floating masses, between which a boat might have passed, had we not dreaded the danger of being driven against them. On the following day a fisherman arrived at Grisselhamn, in a small boat, from the first island where we were to land. He agreed to conduct us if we were inclined to encounter the risk. I immediately consented to this proposal. I had procured a larger boat than his for the convenience of my carriage; but this, while it augmented the difficulty, diminished the danger, because it was better able to withstand any shock it might receive from the huge masses of floating ice. It happened as I had foreseen. These little ice

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islands, floating on the surface of the sea, caused it to resemble a piece of ground hollowed out and cleft on all sides. As the wind was extremely feeble, the shocks which my little bark received from the masses of ice did not in the least injure it. However, as they floated round us on every side, and accumulated before the prow of the vessel, threatening every instant to drive us back to the main land, it became necessary to have recourse to the hatchet. Oftener than once were the sailors and I forced to get upon these floating islands to break and detach them from the sides of the vessel, in order to give passage to the prow, and to enable us to act with our oars. Though the passage between the continent and the first island did not exceed seven Swedish miles, it took us ten hours to accomplish it. This sea adventure amused me highly, though perhaps such details may not prove equally gratifying to my readers; but, let it be remembered, I address them to Italians, who are not accustomed to such spectacles. Our course to the other islands being shorter, and less in-

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cumbered with ice, was much more readily effected. The contemplation of this sterile and savage country, together with the profound and unbroken stillness of the atmosphere, served to excite in my mind ideas at once sublime and melancholy.

I at length landed at Abo, the capital of Swedish Finland, and pursued my journey through excellent roads, and with good horses, to Petersburg, where I arrived near the end of May. I cannot even tell whether this was by day or night, for in such a northern climate, there is scarcely any night at that season of the year. I felt so much exhausted by never leaving my carriage for several nights successively, my head was so confused, and I was moreover so wearied with the perpetual light, that I knew neither the day of the week nor the hour of the day on which I arrived; I scarcely even knew what part of the globe I was in, inasmuch as the manners, the dress, and long beards of the Muscovites induced me rather to believe that I was in Tartary than in Europe.

I had read the history of Peter the Great

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by Voltaire—a work which I obtained at the Academy of Turin from the Russian students, whose nation was much spoken of at this time as having lately emerged from barbarism. My imagination, which had never yet failed to magnify every thing, left me on the present occasion as usual the regret of being deceived. Hence I approached Petersburg with a mind wound up to an extraordinary pitch of anxiety and expectation. But, alas! no sooner had I reached this Asiatic assemblage of wooden huts, than Rome, Genoa, Venice, and Florence, rose to my recollection; and I could not refrain from laughing. What I afterwards saw of this country tended still more strongly to confirm my first impression that it merited not to be seen. Every thing, except their beards and their horses, disgusted me so much, that during six weeks I remained among these savages I wished not to become acquainted with any one, nor even to see the two or three youths with whom I had associated at Turin, and who were descended from the first families of the country. I took no measure to be

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presented to the celebrated Autocratrix Catherine II. nor did I even behold the countenance of a sovereign who in our days has outstripped fame. On investigating at a future period the reason of such extraordinary conduct, I became convinced that it proceeded from a certain intolerance of character and a hatred to every species of tyranny, and which in this particular instance attached itself to a person suspected of the most horrible crime—the murder of a defenceless husband. I have frequently heard it alleged by the defenders of Catherine that she had no other object, in assuming the reins of government, than to repair the evils committed by her husband, to give a constitution to the country, and to restore the Russians at least in part to the rights of which they had been deprived by slavery. I beheld them, however, groaning beneath the despotic yoke of this philosophic clytæmnestra. Indignant at what I saw, I declined going to Moscow, as had been my original intention, and I ardently longed to return to Europe. With this view I set out towards the close of June, and passed

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through Riga and Revel. The monotonous appearance of the barren and sandy plains I traversed more than overbalanced the pleasure I had received from the view of the immense and magnificent forests of Sweden. I pursued my journey by Koningsberg and Dantzick. This last city, which had heretofore enjoyed opulence and freedom, began to experience about this time the despotic sway of the King of Prussia, who had taken possession of it with his troops. Thus, while filled with hatred against the Russians and Prussians, I at length arrived the second time at Berlin, after a month's journey, which to me proved the most tedious, vexatious, and harrassing of any I had ever undertaken, being every where forced during my route to make known my name, age, rank, and the object of my travels, all which a sentinel demands of you on entering, traversing, and leaving every little village; in short, this of all the journeys I ever performed was the most gloomy and sorrowful. I visited Zorndorff, a spot rendered famous by the sanguinary battle fought between the

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Russians and Prussians, where thousands of men on both sides were immolated on the altar of despotism, and thus escaped from the galling yoke which oppressed them. The place of their interment was easily recognised by its greater verdure, and by yielding more abundant crops than the barren and unproductive soil in its immediate vicinity. On this occasion, I reflected with sorrow that slaves seem every where only born to fertilize the soil on which they vegetate.

My exhausted strength forced me to stop three days at Berlin. Towards the end of July, I again set out, and in my progress passed through Magdeburg, Brunswick, Gottingen, Cassel, and Francfort. On entering Gottingen, so justly renowned for its university, I met with a beautiful little ass, which I treated with the most sumptuous fare in my power, not having seen one for the last twelve months, as these animals are neither bred nor thrive in the north. This encounter between an *Italian* and *German* ass in so celebrated an university would have inspired me to write the most ludicrous and laughable verses, had my

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abilities corresponded with my inclination. But my incapacity for writing progressively augmented: I contented myself with musing on this subject, and spent a happy day wholly absorbed in thinking on my ass. These halcyon days seldom occurred with me, as I lived in the greatest retirement, without any occupation, without ever looking into a book or opening my mouth.

From Francfort I proceeded to Mentz, where I embarked on the Rhine, and descended that beautiful river as far as Cologne, experiencing during my passage the greatest pleasure from the view of its verdant and luxuriant banks. From Cologne, I returned by the way of Aix-la-Chapelle to Spa, at which place I had spent several weeks two years before, and which I always wished to re-visit. The manners of the inhabitants were exactly conformable to my taste, because I could remain wholly unknown amidst incessant festivity and bustle. I felt myself so much at my ease, that I prolonged my stay from the middle of August to the end of September—a long period for one of my restless disposition. Here I pur-

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chased two Irish horses; one of them was a noble animal, and I became very fond of it. I rode out every day, dined at an ordinary, and went every evening to witness the performance of some young and beautiful female dancers. It was thus that I spent, or more properly mis-spent my time. As the bathing season was nearly over, and as most of the company had already left Spa, I set out for Holland, where I expected to see my friend d'Acunha. It was but too true, that the lady whom I had so passionately loved, was no longer at the Hague, having quitted that city in order to reside with her husband at Paris. Not wishing to separate from my horses, I sent my domestic Elias on before with the carriage, while I, walking and riding alternately, took the road to Liege. In this city I found an old acquaintance, a French envoy. I complied with his wish to introduce me to the Prince Bishop, not so much through complaisance as the eccentricity of my character. Having never seen the court of the Empress Catherine, I was anxious to view that of the Prince of Liege. Du-

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ring my stay at Spa, I had been introduced to a yet more petty ecclesiastical Prince, the Abbe of Stavelo, in the Ardennes. In passing through his bishopric, the same French envoy conducted me to his residence, where we partook of an excellent dinner. From Liege I proceeded with my favourite horses by Brussels and Antwerp, and crossing the Mordyke, pursued my journey through Rotterdam to the Hague. My friend, with whom I had kept up a regular correspondence, received me with open arms, and finding me less foolish than formerly, endeavoured by the most wise and benevolent counsels to impress on my mind the propriety of persevering in the road to improvement. I remained with him nearly two months, but as the season was already far advanced, and as I anxiously wished to re-visit England, we bade each other adieu towards the termination of November. I pursued the same route as in my former journey, and arriving happily at Harwich I reached London in a few days. I found all the friends with whom I had formerly

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associated at the time of my first visit, particularly Prince Masserano, the Spanish ambassador, and the Marquis Caraccioli, the Neapolitan minister, a man possessing much sagacity, and of a lively character. They both treated me with parental kindness during my stay in that capital, where I found myself in very difficult and perplexing circumstances.

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CHAPTER X.

I fall in Love for the second time.

On my first visit to London, I became deeply enamoured of a lady of high rank. It was perhaps her image, unconsciously engraven on my mind, that had not a little contributed to render the country delightful in my eyes, and to induce me to re-visit it. Though the lady in question appeared not unfavourable to my suit, yet my repulsive and boorish character preserved me from her chains. Having become somewhat more civilized at my return, and being of an age more susceptible of a violent attachment, while forgetting what I had suffered at the Hague from the dominion of this passion, I fell desperately in love. My feelings were so vehement and outrageous,

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that even now, when entering on my ninth lustrum, I shudder at the recollection. I had frequent opportunities of seeing the mistress of my heart at the house of Prince Masserano, whose lady shared with her a box at the Opera. I never saw her at her own house, because the English ladies were not then accustomed to receive visits, particularly from foreigners; besides, her husband was extremely jealous, at least as much so as an Englishman could be.

These obstacles served only the more to enflame my passion. Every morning I endeavoured to obtain a sight of her, either in Hyde Park, or some other public walk, while in the evening I met her at assemblies, or at the theatre. Thus our attachment gradually became more confirmed. But though at the time I cherished the idea of our passion being mutual, I yet was in reality very unhappy, as I could not devise any means of seeing her without witnesses and without danger. Time flew rapidly on, and the spring fast approached, when she was to depart for the country with the

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intention of remaining seven or eight months, and where it would be utterly impossible for me to see her. I anticipated with dismay the period of her leaving town, which was fixed for the end of June, and viewed it as the termination of my existence. Such was the morbid state of both my mind and body, that I considered it physically impossible for me to survive her loss. This passion far exceeded that which I formerly experienced, both in intensity and duration. The idea of my death, which was indelibly connected with our separation, rendered me so desperate, that I acted like a man who had nothing farther to lose. The character of this woman, who delighted only in extremes, tended not a little to nourish this species of phrenzy. Things were in this state when our mutual imprudence attracted the attention of her husband, who on several occasions evinced his resentment at our conduct. This was precisely what I wished, because the publicity which his anger would give to the affair would soon bring matters to a

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crisis. I passed nearly five months in this truly dreadful state of anxiety, but at length the cloud burst over my head. I had at different times been admitted into her house, even by herself, at no small risk to us both, and never yet been detected.

At London the houses are extremely small, and the doors are always kept shut. As the domestics usually reside in the underground apartment, it is extremely easy for those in the house to open the street door, and to introduce any one, who may readily conceal himself in the small apartments, which are near the outer door, and on a level with the street. Hitherto we had eluded detection, as we took the precaution of choosing the time when the husband was from home, and while the servants were at dinner. Emboldened by impunity we forgot the dangers which surrounded us.

In the month of May, her husband having taken her to spend a few days at a country seat sixteen miles from London, I was informed by her when I might obtain a private interview. She fixed on a day, when her husband, who was an officer in

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the guards, was obliged to attend a review and sleep in London. On the evening of the appointed day I set out, unattended, on horseback; and as she had given me a particular description of the place, I left my horse at an inn not far distant. It was already dark, and I pursued my way on foot to the park gate, where I found her awaiting my arrival. I entered it fully persuaded that no one had seen me. These interviews, instead of satisfying only augmented our passion, for the dread of separation was ever present to our minds. We took therefore every precaution to render our meetings as frequent as possible, at the same time lamenting that on her removing to a distant country seat, it would be absolutely impossible to renew them. On returning to London, I reflected with unutterable anguish that two days must elapse before I could again see her. This interval appeared an age in my imagination. I lived in a kind of delirious transport, which it would be in vain for me to describe to those who have not been agitated by the same tumultuous and ungovernable passion.

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Without any definite object, I walked incessantly, and when forced to stop for a moment either through lassitude or fatigue, or to take sleep or sustenance, I immediately started up, setting forth lamentations, and howling and acting in every respect like an idiot or madman.

Among my horses I still preserved the one I had purchased at Spa. When I mounted him, I committed a thousand extravagant tricks, which even struck with astonishment the boldest horseman in England. I leaped over the thickest and highest hedges, the widest ditches, and every barrier that stood in my way and opposed my progress. On one of these days, when it was not permitted me to visit the retreat of my mistress, while taking an airing with the Marquis of Caraccioli, I became suddenly seized with the whim of shewing him what extraordinary feats my horse was capable of performing, and set off at full gallop with the intention of clearing a high gate near the public road. But as my head was distracted at the time, I did not manage the reins with sufficient

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dexterity, and we both came to the ground. On recovering my feet, it appeared to me I had received no injury.; besides my mad passion had augmented my courage, and it seemed as if I purposely sought every occasion of breaking my neck. The Marquis Caraccioli had in vain cried out to me to return, but I remained deaf to his entreaties; in short I knew not what I did. Observing my horse about to escape, I ran up to him, and laying old of the reins, I vaulted on his back, and spurring him furiously towards the unlucky gate, he cleared it in a trice, thus regaining his own honour and mine.

This triumph was however but short lived. I had scarcely proceeded a few paces, when a shivering pervaded my whole frame, and I experienced an excruciating pain in my left shoulder. My arm had been dislocated, and the collar bone fractured. The pain progressively augmented, and being able only to proceed at a slow pace, the road on returning appeared unusually tedious. A surgeon was immediately called in, who after putting me to great pain, bandaged

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up my arm, and enjoined me to remain in bed. Those alone who have felt the dominion of a passion so ardent as mine can form an idea of my rage when I found myself confined to bed on the evening of the happy day which was fixed on for our second meeting. This accident occurred on a Saturday morning. During the whole of that day, and the subsequent Sunday, till towards the evening, I maintained a considerable degree of composure. As this repose somewhat invigorated my strength, and augmented my courage, I arose at six o'clock in the evening, notwithstanding the remonstrances of my faithful Elias, and entering a post-chaise, hurried on where love impelled me. The pain of my arm, and the extreme tightness of the bandages, prevented me proceeding on horseback. As prudential considerations rendered it unadviseable that I should proceed to the house of my mistress in my carriage with my postillion, I determined to leave it behind. With this view I quitted it about two miles distance from the place of my destination, and pursued the remainder of the way on foot,

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with one arm in a sling and the other holding a sword. This precaution I deemed necessary on entering by night an unknown house.

Notwithstanding the jolting of the post-chaise had deranged the bandages, and grievously augmented the pain of my shoulder, which has never since been properly replaced, yet I considered myself while approaching the residence of my mistress as the happiest man alive. I at length arrived at the park gate, which I found shut, though this was not the case on my former visit. I however succeeded, after much difficulty, in climbing over the palisades. The husband slept that night at London, having to attend a review on the subsequent morning. I reached the apartment of my mistress, who, I found, expected me. I did not retire till day-break, and departed in the same manner I entered, persuaded that no one had seen me. I returned to my carriage, and reached London about seven in the morning, agitated no less with the regret of having quitted my mistress, than with the pain I suffered from my

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shoulder. I was however in such a state of phrenzy that I did not in the least embarrass myself about the consequences.

I again sent for the surgeon, but I did not permit him to do any thing farther than merely to adjust the bandages. Finding myself a little better on the Tuesday evening, I went to the Opera, where I found Prince Masserano and his lady. As they supposed I was hurt and confined to my chamber, they were not a little surprised to see me in no other respect ill than with my arm in a sling.

While apparently with an unruffled countenance, and an air of tranquillity, I listened to the music, and while my heart was agitated with a thousand different passions, I conceived I heard my name pronounced in a high tone by some one in the lobby. By a kind of mechanical impulse, I opened the box door, and immediately went out, shutting it after me. The first person I saw was the husband of my mistress, who had been demanding admittance.

For a long time I had anticipated this meeting, which I rather wished than took means

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to avoid. On darting out of the box, I exclaimed:— "Who inquires for me?" "It is I," replied he, "I wish to speak with you."— "Let us go, I am ready," said I, and without uttering another word we left the house.

It was about half past seven in the evening. During the long days of the summer the Opera commences at six o'clock. From the Haymarket we took the road to St. James's Park; thence we adjourned to a field termed the Green Park, where, having sought a retired corner, we drew our swords. In proceeding along Pall-Mall he spoke several times, reproaching me with having clandestinely entered his house at different times, and demanded from me the reason of such conduct. Though I felt the upbraidings of my conscience, and was sensible of his just ground of resentment against me, notwithstanding my distraction at the time, I yet preserved sufficient presence of mind not to make any other reply than to affirm that the charge was not true; but that if he gave any credit to it, I was ready to give him satisfaction. He repeated his assertions, and was so circumstantial in his

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details, that I became thoroughly satisfied his information was correct. At length he said, "It can serve no purpose to deny it, since my wife has avowed all to me herself." These words confounded me, and I replied in a very reprehensible manner, and of which I afterwards repented, "*since she avows it, why should I deny it?*"

These words in fact hastily escaped my lips, because I was dissatisfied with myself in having denied what was so palpably manifest, and in acting a part, which though undertaken in order to screen my mistress, did yet great violence to my feelings in presence of the man I had so deeply injured. Such was our conversation during the way; but when we had arrived at the spot, and I was about to draw, my antagonist observing my left arm in a sling, had the generosity to inquire whether that would not incapacitate me from fighting. I replied in the negative, and thanking him for this mark of attention, immediately put myself on my guard. I was never a proficient in the use of the sword. I rushed on him contrary to all

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the rules of art, like a madman as I was, for in fact I wished to meet death at his hands. I knew not what I did, but I must have attacked him with all the energy of which I was capable, since after fighting for seven or eight minutes, the sun was behind me, which at the commencement shone directly in my eyes so as to prevent me seeing him. He must consequently in retiring have described a curve. I conceived that, as he only parried my blows, his aim was not to kill me, and that, if he did not fall under my arm, it was from my incapability and want of skill. At last, making a thrust, he wounded me between the elbow and the wrist, a circumstance of which he was the first to apprise me, for I myself was unconscious of it, and in fact the wound was but slight. He then lowered the point of his sword, and said he was satisfied, inquiring at the same time if I were so likewise. I replied as I was the aggressor, that rested solely with him. On this, sheathing his sword, an example which I followed, he immediately left the field.

When alone, I wished to ascertain the

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nature of my wound; and on examination discovered that the sleeve of my coat had been torn, but not finding much pain, and observing the effusion of blood only trifling, I conceived it was but a mere scratch. Not having the use of my left arm, I could not pull off my coat without assistance, and was therefore obliged to rest contented with binding up the wound in the best manner I was able with a handkerchief by means of my teeth, so as to diminish the loss of blood. Leaving the Park, I hastened along Pall-Mall, and reached the door of the Opera House an hour after I had quitted it.

Observing by the lights in the streets, that neither my hands nor dress were stained with blood, I unbound the handkerchief, and feeling no pain, returned to Prince Masserano's box. On entering it, the prince inquired why I had retired so precipitately, and where I had been. Discovering from this that he had not overheard our discourse, I merely said I had recollected an appointment, and added nothing farther. Notwithstanding my efforts to appear calm,

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my mind was dreadfully harrassed by reflecting on the consequences of this affair, and particularly on the injury it might do to the woman I adored. Restless and unhappy, I quitted the theatre a quarter of an hour after I had entered it, without having any determinate object in view. As my wound did not prevent me walking, the idea struck me of proceeding to the residence of the sister-in-law of my mistress, who had favoured our correspondence, and at whose house we had sometimes met each other. This was a fortunate idea.

On entering the apartment, the first object which presented itself to my view was my mistress herself. This unexpected meeting agitated me greatly: she entered into some details respecting this unfortunate affair, which were not however perfectly accurate. It was reserved for me to learn the truth through another channel. She said her husband had received information that some one had been introduced into his country-house, without however learning who it was. He had also been informed that on the same day a gentleman had left

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his horse at a neighbouring inn, and that on returning for it he had paid the inn-keeper liberally without saying a word respecting himself or the motives of his journey.

These circumstances had induced him before going to London to employ some of his domestics to keep a strict watch in the house, and report to him all that occurred during his absence. This happened precisely on the Sunday that I reached his residence at nightfall. His spies had seen me cross the church-yard, approach the little gate, and, on finding it shut, leap over the park rails. They had also seen me leave the horse at day-break, and take the great road to London. They however neither ventured to speak nor even to shew themselves. Having no personal interest in the affair, and seeing me armed and proceeding with a resolute air, they did not attempt to molest me. It is certain, however, that had they wished to impede my progress, the most fatal consequences might have ensued. If I had attempted to fly I might have been considered a robber, or if I had attacked them in my own defence, I

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might have been held up as a murderer and assassin; and certainly I had pre-determined not to allow myself to be taken while I could make use of my sword. However it had happened, I should certainly have been exposed to severe punishment in a country where no individual can violate the laws with impunity. I shudder even now when reflecting on it, though at the time I did not hesitate to brave every thing. Chance so ordered it, that the husband, when returning on the Monday evening, was driven by the same postillion who had conducted me, and who recounted to him that I had left him at some distance, that he had waited for me during the night, and various other circumstances. He had given him such an accurate description of my person that it was impossible to mistake the likeness. On arriving at his own house the domestics made a report to their master of what they had witnessed, and thus he became convinced of his wife's infidelity and his own dishonour. This trait of English jealousy puts Italian jealousy to the blush, so different are the results which flow from

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the same passion in individuals born under different climates and governed by different laws! Every Italian reader expects to hear on such occasions of secret assassination or poisoning, or that the female has been immured for life; nothing however of that kind occurs in England. The English husband, though he loves his wife to adoration, does not give way to ebullitions of passion, or indulge himself in menaces or complaints, but immediately proceeds to adduce evidence of her guilt before a court of justice. He declared to her on the Tuesday morning, that henceforward he no longer considered her as his wife, and that he would immediately proceed to sue for a divorce. He added, that this would not appease him, but that he would avenge himself on me for the outrages he had received, and that he would immediately repair to London, where it would not be difficult to find me out. On this, without a moment's delay, she dispatched a messenger, in whom she could confide, with a letter, informing me of what had passed. The courier, who was munificently rewarded, nearly destroyed a horse

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in riding post to London, where he arrived an hour before the husband. By good fortune, neither of them found me at home, and I remained ignorant of these occurrences. When the husband learned I had gone out, it immediately occurred to him that I might be at the Opera, where he found me as has been already related. It was fortunate for me on this occasion that I had dislocated the left arm and not the right, and that I did not receive the letter of my mistress till after our rencontre, as I might not otherwise have conducted myself so well. As soon as the husband had departed, his wife immediately followed him to London, and proceeded to the house of her sister-in-law, which was near to that of her husband's. Having been informed that he had arrived an hour before her, and that he had immediately shut himself up in his apartment, and would see no one, she immediately concluded that we had fought and I had fallen. This recital, which she made at different intervals, was frequently interrupted by sobs and tears. It opened to my view, however, a happy and unexpected

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termination to my difficulties, as the approaching divorce would enable me to espouse her, which was all I desired. Intoxicated with this hope, I no longer remembered my wound, till my mistress, a few hours afterwards, wished to have it examined. The skin was only found slightly grazed, and some blood between the folds of the shirt. When this operation was performed, I had the curiosity to examine my sword, and found the blade notched like a saw, and diminished nearly one half, so much difficulty had my adversary found in parrying my blows. This sword I preserved as a trophy during several years.

The night was already so far advanced that it became necessary to separate. Before returning home, however, I wished to call on the Marquis Caraccioli, in order to inform him of what had passed. Having heard a confused account of the affair, he believed I had fallen, and received me as a man risen from the dead, embracing, and giving me tokens of the most ardent friendship. We spent two hours in conversing together, and it was near day-break before

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I returned home. I threw myself immediately on my bed, and after the agitation I had experienced, soon fell into a profound and refreshing sleep.

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CHAPTER XI.

I find myself grossly deceived.

Such was the exact history of the preceding day. On the arrival of the courier, covered with sweat, who intreated Elias with the greatest earnestness instantly to deliver to me a letter of which he was the bearer, this faithful domestic immediately sallied forth in quest of me. He first went to the house of Prince Masserano, and not finding me there, next proceeded to that of the Marquis Caraccioli, which was some miles distant from the other. On returning home to Suffolk-Street, near the Hay-market, it struck him to inquire for me at the Opera-House. The box-keeper,

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who knew me very well, informed him that I had gone out in company with a gentleman who had earnestly inquired for me. Elias was well acquainted, though not by me, with the history of my amours. The name of the person who had come in search of me, and the circumstances which accompanied the delivery of the letter, immediately awakened his fears. He knew my inferiority in the art of fencing, which was still farther increased by the dislocation of my left arm, and he regarded me as lost. He flew to St. James's Park; but not having looked into the Green Park, his search proved fruitless. Night coming on, he was compelled to leave the Park along with others, and not knowing where to gain any information concerning me, he proceeded to the residence of the husband in the hope of hearing something to satisfy his anxiety. He reached it at the moment the former alighted from his carriage, and saw him dart into the house, with a sword beneath his arm, at the same time giving orders to his people to shut the door in an agitated tone of voice. These

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appearances confirmed Elias in the notion that I had fallen, and not knowing which way to act, he sought an audience of the Marquis Caraccioli, in order to inform him what he knew, and what he feared.

Invigorated by several hours of profound sleep, I had my wound dressed, and flew to the house of my mistress, with whom I spent the whole day. From the domestics whom we had employed to gain intelligence, we learned every thing that passed in the house of her husband, which was only at a short distance, as I have before mentioned, from the one of which she was now an inmate. Though it appeared to me that the divorce would terminate our misfortunes, though the father of the lady whom I had known for two years called to congratulate his daughter on having now made a choice, he was pleased to say, worthy of her; notwithstanding all these favourable appearances, I conceived I could discern on the beautiful face of my mistress a cloud which presaged a new calamity. She wept without ceasing, protesting every moment that she loved me beyond expression.

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She assured me that the publicity of this affair, and the dishonour with which she was loaded, would be amply compensated by the happiness of living always with me; but she added, that she was certain I would never espouse her. The obstinacy with which she persevered in repeating these words almost drove me to distraction. Fully conscious that she considered me neither a knave nor a hypocrite, I could not perfectly divine the cause of her melancholy and distrust. This harrowing perplexity destroyed all the pleasure I felt in seeing her every hour of the day without restraint. The process which was already commenced also contributed to add to my disquiet, as it gave publicity to the whole affair, a consideration necessarily repugnant to the feelings of every one not wholly destitute of shame.

Hence it may be readily conjectured, what anxiety I suffered during the interval between Wednesday and Friday. On the morning of the last mentioned day, I again implored my mistress to unfold the cause of her sorrow and sadness, and to explain

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what appeared to me enigmatical in her discourse. After a long preamble, occasionally interrupted by sobs and tears, she at length said she was unworthy of me, and that circumstances rendered our union impossible. Previous to her attachment to me she had loved ..... Who then? I inquired with the most impetuous vehemence. The groom who was in her husband's service. Who was he? When?—Great God! my brain is on fire! Why tell it me? cruel woman! It would have been better to assassinate me! On recovering her speech, she by degrees made the shameful avowal of her disgraceful amours, the details of which filled my soul with horror.

My worthy precursor was at this very moment in her husband's service. It was he who had watched the conduct of his mistress; it was he who had discovered my first journey to the country, and the horse I had left at the inn. It was he also who, with the other domestics, had witnessed my second excursion on the Sunday evening as before related. As soon as he was informed that his master had been engaged with

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me in a duel, and that he was nearly distracted at the idea of separating from a woman to whom he was so passionately attached, this man determined on the Thursday to request an audience. This being granted, the lover made a full confession of his amours, which had been carried on for three years. In his recital he omitted no circumstance which could tend to undeceive his master, and avenge himself on his faithless mistress and hated rival. He concluded by earnestly intreating him not to give way to despair, and to consider the loss of such a woman rather as a blessing than a curse. These circumstances I learned afterwards. She herself only related to me the simple fact, blending it with details in order to palliate her conduct. Language is altogether inadequate to express the emotions of grief and rage with which I was agitated on this occasion. Frantic and beside myself, I every moment assumed the most desperate and fatal resolutions, and immediately afterwards abandoned them. The feelings of my lacerated heart were vented by turns in groans and

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execrations; I still, however, felt that I loved her to distraction. Even now, after the lapse of twenty years, when I reflect on what I then suffered, my blood boils in my veins.

I at length quitted her after saying that she was perfectly correct in supposing I would never espouse her; that if chance had after our union unveiled to me such infamous conduct, I would have killed her with my own hand; and that I should have destroyed myself at the same time if I had loved her with equal ardour as I did at the present moment. I added, that she was less to me an object of contempt from having had the candour and energy of mind to acknowledge her guilt; that I would ever be her friend, and would never abandon her; that if she chose I would accompany her to some remote corner of Europe or America, and there spend my days with her, on condition, however, that she should never assume the title of my wife.

When leaving her on the Friday evening I was agitated by all the demons of hell. During the night, I never shut my eyes,

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and arose as soon as it was day-break. Having seated myself mechanically at a table, I cast my eyes on one of the daily papers. Glancing accidentally over it, I observed my own name in one of the columns. I read it, and found that it not only gave a very full detail of my own adventure, but even the very name and age of the groom my rival, together with the ample confession which he made to his master. Had I not been seated at the time, I verily believe I should have fallen down on reading the paragraph. In a few moments, however, a ray of light darted into my mind; I clearly perceived that my perfidious mistress had made a merit of avowing in the evening what had been contained in the newspaper of the morning. Losing on this all restraint over myself, I flew to her house, and after loading her with the most abusive and contemptuous epithets, intermingled with expressions of the most ardent love, tenderness, and sorrow, I departed, vowing I would never see her more, though in less than an hour I again returned and spent the whole day with her. I

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went back on the following, and every succeeding day, till she resolved to quit London, where she had become the talk of the public, in order to retire to a convent in France. I accompanied her in a tour through several of the counties of England, with a view to protract the moment of our separation. I was indignant at myself for this conduct, yet I could not assume sufficient courage to tear myself from her. Having at length, however, seized a moment when shame and irritation triumphed over love, I left her at Rochester, whence she and her sister-in-law proceeded to France by the way of Dover, while I returned to London.

On my arrival, I learned that I was made the principal party in the process of divorce still pending, the husband having chosen to bring me forward in preference to the groom in this affair. I was moreover informed that he still retained this man in his service: so truly generous and evangelical is English jealousy! I cannot sufficiently extol the conduct of this worthy husband;

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He neither wished to kill me when I was in his power, nor yet sought to extort from me the damages usually allowed by the law in such cases. If, instead of making me draw my sword, it had been his object to subject me to a pecuniary penalty, it would have greatly embarrassed my circumstances. The damages awarded on such occasions are always in proportion to the injury received, and those which he had experienced were incalculable, as much on account of the attachment he still preserved for his wife, as from the ridicule with which the confession of the groom had overwhelmed him. This intrepid and generous man acted throughout the whole affair in a manner I very little merited. As the fact was too evident to admit of a doubt, a divorce was obtained without my being under the necessity of appearing in court, and without any measures being taken to impede my departure from England.

It may be deemed by some extremely inconsiderate in me to have given publicity to such an affair; but this I conceived I

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owed to my readers, because it made a great noise at the time, and because the relation of such events tend more fully to display my character to those who may have a desire to become intimately acquainted with it.

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CHAPTER XII.

I resume my Travels—Re-visit Holland and France—Proceed to Spain and Portugal, and from thence to Piedmont.

AFTER the late events I could no more taste tranquillity when I every day beheld those objects which called up the recollection of my sufferings. All those who interested themselves in my concerns, and commiserated my fate, urged me to leave England. I accordingly took my departure about the end of June, and as in the distracted state of my mind I longed for the consolations of friendship, I instinctively thought of D'Acunha and Holland. Arriving at the Hague, I remained with him several weeks, carefully avoiding the society of every one else. He did every thing in his power to assuage my sorrow, but my wound was too deep to admit of

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consolation. I felt my melancholy daily augmented, and imagining that the dissipation inseparable from incessant change of place, and the sight of new objects, could alone soothe my perturbed feelings, I resolved to proceed to Spain, the only European country I had not yet visited. With this view I took the road to Brussels, the sight of which aggravated my sorrow by the comparison which I drew between my first attachment in Holland, and my recent adventure in England. Either absorbed in a reverie, delirious, or shedding tears in silence, I at length arrived, all alone, at Paris. This great capital, in the amusements of which I was not a partaker, was equally disagreeable to me now as formerly. Here I remained, however, for a month, till the great heats began to abate, before entering Spain. I might, had I been so inclined, have obtained an introduction to the celebrated Jean Jacques Rousseau, through the medium of an Italian acquaintance, who lived in habits of intimacy with him, and who predicted that we should be mutually pleased with each

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other. I greatly esteemed Rousseau, but it was more on account of his upright and independent character than from his works since the little I had read of them rather disgusted me, owing to the labour and affectation of sentiment evident throughout all the productions of this author. Nevertheless, as I possessed little curiosity, and still less accommodation to the foibles of others, and was equally proud and unbending as himself, without the same title to be so, I inclined not to embrace the offered introduction, the success of which was at least doubtful. Why seek the acquaintance of an odd and morose man, to whom I would have rendered ten coarse expressions for one; since by a kind of natural instinct, I always repaid with usury both evil and good.

Instead therefore of cultivating an intimacy with Rousseau, I formed what was much more interesting to me, an acquaintance with the works of the most celebrated characters in Italy, or perhaps in the world. I purchased during my stay in Paris a collection of the works of our most celebrated writers both in Prose and Verse, in

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thirty-six small handsome volumes. These became my constant companions, though I must confess I did not derive all the advantage from them which might naturally have been expected, during the two or three first years they remained in my possession, as I then had neither inclination nor opportunity for study. With respect to the Italian language, I had so totally forgotten it, as to be scarcely capable of comprehending the least abstruse of our authors; but on occasionally opening some of my thirty-six volumes, I was much surprised to see such a list of poetasters and rhymers, bound up with our principal poets. So consummate indeed was my ignorance, that I knew not even the titles of the works of Torrachionne, Morgante, Ricciardetto, &c. poems which I have since regretted having spent so much time in perusing. The acquisition of this work proved of the most incalculable benefit to me; I never afterwards parted with these six fathers of our divine language, Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, Boccace, and Machiavel, in whom every excellence is concentrated.

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To my eternal shame I had attained my twenty-second year without having read any of these classics, excepting a few portions of Ariosto, during my adolescence.

With such a powerful antidote against idleness and ennui, I departed for Spain about the middle of August. I passed through Orleans, Tours, Poitiers, Bourdeaux, and Toulouse, the most delightful and luxuriant part of France, without casting on it a single glance, and entered Spain by the way of Perpignan. Barcelona was the first city at which I stopped since my departure from Paris. During this journey I did nothing but weep in secret. I opened occasionally some of the volumes of my favourite Montaigne, which I had not looked into during the last twelve months; and this occupation gradually restored me to reason, and imparted to my mind a certain degree of fortitude and even consolation.

Before leaving Britain, I had disposed of my whole stud, except the most beautiful animals, which I left in charge of the Marquis Caraccioli: and as horses were

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become with me a necessary of existence, I purchased two a few days after my arrival at Barcelona. They were both of the Andalusian race, the one a noble animal, while the other, though somewhat smaller, was full of spirit. I had always longed to possess Spanish horses, but this desire had never till now been gratified; my heart therefore bounded with joy on becoming master of two of the most beautiful of their kind. My horses afforded me still more consolation than Montaigne. I reckoned on performing with them my journey through Spain, as the roads in this country are so extremely bad, that it has hitherto been found impracticable to establish regular post-coaches: they can only travel short stages at a mule's pace.

A slight indisposition having compelled me to remain at Barcelona till the month of November, I endeavoured with the aid of a Spanish grammar and dictionary to acquire a knowledge of this beautiful language, which is not a difficult task to an Italian. In a few days I began to comprehend and relish Don Quixotte. It is

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true, indeed, my progress was much facilitated by having formerly perused this work in French.

I took the road to Saragossa and Madrid, and I gradually became accustomed to travel through desert tracts, from which it would have been difficult to extricate myself, had I not possessed youth, patience, and money. During the fifteen days which intervened from the time of my setting out till I reached Madrid, I was obliged to take up my abode in some of the half-civilized villages which lay in my route. This proved more irksome to me than even the want of post-roads; besides change of place always afforded me pleasure, while on the contrary I regarded inaction as the greatest curse.

I performed almost the whole of this journey on foot, with my Andalusian courser, which accompanied me like a faithful dog, and appeared to understand whatever was said to him. How great was my delight on being alone with him in the vast wilds of Arragon. I sent forward my domestics with the carriage, and followed

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them at a short distance. Elias, mounted on a very handsome mule, occasionally shot some hares, rabbits, and birds. He preceded me by several hours, and halted at mid-day, and in the evening to prepare the game for my repast.

It was unfortunate for me, though perhaps fortunate for others, that I had at this time no means of expressing either my ideas or emotions in verse. The melancholy and moral reflections, the terrific and gay images of every hue, which the sight of these profound solitudes presented to my imagination, would certainly have inspired me with the desire of composing verses, had I known how to give expression to my ideas, and not been prepossessed with the notion that I should never succeed in writing either prose or verse. I spent my time in a reverie, weeping and laughing by turns, like an infant, without knowing why. This state of mind is termed poetic, enthusiasm when it leads to the production of any work, but is justly regarded as folly when unproductive of fruit.

In this manner I proceeded to Madrid.

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The taste I had acquired for a wandering life tended not to overcome the indolence of my disposition. I remained only one month in the Spanish capital, and during that period did not form a single acquaintance, except with a watchmaker who was lately returned from Holland, where he had been to acquire a knowledge of his art. This young Spaniard possessed much natural intelligence; he had seen something of the world, and felt for the tyranny which weighed so heavy on his native country. I must here relate a trait of brutality to which Elias had nearly fallen a victim. One evening when I had supped with the watchmaker, and just as we were about to rise from table, Elias entered to arrange my hair, as was customary with him, before going to bed. During this operation he stretched one of the hairs so as to give me pain, on which, without saying a word, I started up, seized a candlestick, and threw it at his head. He received the stroke on his right temple, and the blood spouted out with such violence as to cover the watchmaker, who sat at the opposite side of the

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table, which was very large. This young man, who had neither observed nor could conjecture that the stretching of a single hair beyond the rest could produce this sudden phrenzy, justly concluded I had been seized with a fit of insanity, and he sprang forward in order to secure me. Before however he could effect his purpose, the undaunted Elias had fallen on me in order to avenge himself, which he was perfectly able to do, had I not by my uncommon agility freed myself from his grasp. This gave me time to seize my sword, which I drew and directed the point to his breast. Such was the fury of Elias, that he would have rushed forward had not the young Spaniard interposed himself between us. In the meantime the noise had brought up the domestics belonging to the hotel, and we were separated.

Thus ended this tragi-comic affray, which was so disgraceful to me. After acquiring some degree of calmness, I informed Elias that on his plucking my hair I found it impossible to restrain my rage. He assured me that it happened by accident, and un-

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known to him; and the Spaniard was at length convinced that I was not *insane*, but that I was far from being *wise*. I was so ashamed and humbled at my intemperate conduct, that I said to Elias, he would have done well had he killed me, and he was very capable to have done so; for though I myself am above the common size, yet he was much my superior in this respect, and was besides a man of extraordinary courage.

The wound in his temple was not deep, but it bled profusely: had I struck him a little higher, this man, to whom I was much attached, would certainly have fallen by my hand, and that for a *hair*. I was shocked at the brutal excess of passion into which I had fallen. Though Elias was somewhat calmed, he still appeared to retain a certain degree of resentment; yet I was not disposed to display towards him the smallest distrust.

Two hours after his wound was dressed I went to bed, leaving the door open, as usual, between my apartment and the chamber in which he slept; notwithstand-

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ing the remonstrance of the Spaniard, who pointed out to me the absurdity of putting vengeance in the power of a man whom I had so much irritated.

I said even aloud to Elias, who was already in bed, that he might kill me if he was so inclined during the night; and that I justly merited such a fate. But this brave man, who possessed as much elevation of soul as myself, took no other revenge for my outrageous conduct, except preserving for several years two handkerchiefs stained with blood which had been bound round his head, and which he occasionally displayed to my view. It is necessary to be fully acquainted with the character and manners of the Piedmontese in order to comprehend the mixture of ferocity and generosity displayed on both sides in this affair.

When at a more mature age, I endeavoured to discover the cause of this violent transport of rage. I became convinced that the trivial circumstances which gave rise to it, was, so to speak, like the last drop poured into a vessel ready to run over. My

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irascible temper, which must have been rendered still more irritable by solitude and perpetual idleness, required only the slightest impulse to cause it to burst forth. Besides, I never lifted a hand against a domestic, as that would have been putting them on a level with myself. Neither did I ever employ a cane, nor any kind of weapon in order to chastise them, though I frequently threw at them any moveable that fell in my way, as many young people do, during the first ebullitions of anger; yet I dare to affirm that I would have approved, and even esteemed the domestic who should on such occasions have rendered me back the treatment he received, since I never punished them as a master, but only contended with them as one man with another.

Having lived like a bear at Madrid, I left it without having viewed any of those objects calculated to excite the curiosity of strangers. I neither visited the Escurial, Aranjuez, nor the palace, nor even saw the king himself. The chief reason of this extraordinary apathy was, the coldness which prevailed between me and the Sardi-

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nian envoy. I had met this minister in London during his residence at the Court of St. James's, and we were mutually displeased with each other.

On arriving at Madrid, I learned that the court had removed to some one of the royal residences in the country, and I embraced the opportunity of the envoy's absence to leave a note at his house with a letter of recommendation, which I brought as a matter of course from the secretary of state. On his return from the country he called at my lodgings, but found me from home, and no means were afterwards taken on either side to promote a meeting. This circumstance contributed not a little to render my stay unpleasant. I left Madrid early in December, and passing through Toledo and Badajoz, I took the road to Lisbon, where I arrived on the Christmas evening.

The appearance of this city, especially to those who, like me, approach it by the Tagus, is strikingly magnificent. It resembles that of Genoa, but is much more varied and extensive. Viewed at a certain distance,

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it truly enchanted me. My delight and astonishment however diminished as I approached the shore; and were quickly converted into melancholy and sorrow. As soon as I landed, I observed in several streets vestiges of the earthquake, particularly in the lower part of the city, though fifteen years had elapsed since the occurrence of that dreadful and ever memoral catastrophe.

The short stay of five weeks which I made at Lisbon will be an epoch ever dear to my heart; for it was then I became acquainted with the Abbe Caluso, youngest brother to Count Valperga di Masino, at that time our minister at the Court of Portugal. This man, distinguished by his virtues, his character, and his knowledge, rendered the time I spent there extremely delightful. I dined with him every day at his brother's table, and again returned in order to pass with him the long winter evenings, preferring his society to all the amusements the great world could afford. I never departed without having reaped some improvement. His attention and indulgence to me

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were beyond expression, and tended to diminish the shame I felt for my extreme ignorance, which must have been the more disgusting to him as he possessed the most profound knowledge on every subject. I had never before met with the same liberal treatment from men of letters, whose company always appeared insupportable to me, which can excite no surprise, as my ignorance was equal to my pride.

It was during one of these happy evenings that I experienced an enthusiastic love of poetry; but this spark was quickly extinguished, and disappeared for several years. The worthy Abbe read to me the sublime Ode to Fortune by Guido, a poet of whose name I was then ignorant. Some stanzas of this ode, and especially those on Pompey, enchanted me. The delighted Abbe persuaded himself that I had been born a poet, and assured me with a little attention and study I should write very good verses; but this burst of rapture having passed away, I ceased to consider it possible, and thought no more on the subject. The friendship and society of this worthy man, of this *living Montaigne*, proved however of

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the greatest utility in tranquillizing my mind. I began to read, and reflect more than I had done for the last eighteen months. Had it not been for the society of my dear Abbe, I should not have remained ten days in Lisbon, as every thing in this city displeased me except the females, who are extremely voluptuous. But as the health of my mind was become much more important to me than that of the body, I cautiously avoided the society of those likely to inspire me with a serious passion.

At the commencement of February, I set out for Seville and Cadiz, impressed with the most lively friendship and profound esteem for the Abbe Caluso, whom I hoped again to meet at Turin. The climate of Seville, and the original Spanish countenance, which has been better preserved here than in any other part of the kingdom, afforded me much pleasure. I have always preferred an original though bad, to the best copy. The Spanish and Portugese are, I believe, the only European nations who have retained their original manners; this is particularly observable among the lower classes. Though their good qualities be engulphed in an abyss of

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oppression and abuses of every kind, I am fully persuaded these people under a wise government might be led to perform the most brilliant actions, as they possess courage, perseverance, honour, sobriety, docility, patience, and elevation of mind:

I passed the Carnival with some degree of happiness at Cadiz. On leaving this city for Cordova, I perceived that I had brought with me recollections which were not easily effaced. These inglorious wounds embittered my long journey to Turin, which I performed very rapidly, traversing the whole of Spain to the French frontiers. On reaching Perpignan, I found my health in a bad state, but taking post from this place, I suffered infinitely less during the remainder of my journey. The two places which pleased me best during this excursion were Cordova and Valentia. The whole of the latter kingdom, which I passed through about the end of March, presented to my view such a Paradise of delights as brought to my mind the description of spring given by the poets. The environs, the walks, the rivulets, the scite of the city

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of Valentia itself, the bright azure of the heavens, the purity and elasticity of the atmosphere, the females, whose sparkling eyes far outvie those of the ladies of Cadiz, all appeared to me truly romantic. The whole of this country appeared to my astonished view like fairy land; and left on my mind a more ardent desire to re-visit it than any other country I had ever beheld.

On arriving the second time at Barcelona, I was so fatigued with travelling so slowly, that I at last resolved, though with the most lively regret, to part with my beautiful Andalusian horse. He had been ill-used during my last journey, and I could not resolve to fatigue him any more by making him trot behind my carriage. My other horse had become lame between Cordova and Valentia, and as I did not wish to remain on the road till he recovered, I gave him to two very pretty daughters of my host, recommending to them to see him well-treated, and assuring them that he would sell for a considerable sum as soon as he was cured. As to my favourite Andalusian, I could not resolve to sell him,

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being from my nature a great enemy to every species of trafic; I therefore presented him to a French banker residing at Barcelona, with whom I had become acquainted during my first visit to this city.

I shall here recount a circumstance which serves to display the character of these *money agents*. I had in my possession three hundred Spanish doubloons, which the regulations at the custom-house on the frontiers would have rendered it difficult to carry along with me. After making a present of my horse to this banker, I inquired if he could favour me with a bill of exchange on Montpellier, through which I must necessarily pass. In order to evince his *gratitude* for my gift, he took my doubloons and gave me a bill, the interest of which he calculated to a day.

On arriving at Montpellier, I found that I was a loser of seven per cent. This conduct of the banker was certainly not necessary in order to fix my opinion respecting this class of men, whom I have always considered in the worst possible light. They imitate the manners of the nobles,

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and while from ostentation they entertain you at their tables, they rob you on the principles of trade in their counting-room; besides they are always ready to take advantage of every public calamity.

Travelling as fast as gold and the whip could urge on the mules, I proceeded from Barcelona to Perpignan in two days. Always anxious to push forward, I flew rather than travelled post from this place to Antibes, without stopping either at Narbonne, Montpellier, or Aix. From Antibes I instantly embarked for Genoa, where I remained three days in order to recover from my fatigue. I afterwards proceeded to Asti, where I staid some time with my mother, and at length, after an absence of three years, arrived at Turin on the fifth of May, 1772. On passing through Montpellier, I consulted a celebrated surgeon respecting the complaint which attached me at Cadiz. He wished me to put myself under his care, but actuated by my own experience and the advice of Elias, who was a connoisseur in such matters, and who had himself before cured me in Germany, I continued my

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journey in opposition to the advice of the surgeon. The fatigue of this incessant travelling for two months had however so much aggravated my complaint, that on my arrival at Turin I was compelled to have recourse to medical aid, and continued in a valetudinary state during the whole summer. Such was the consequence of my three years' travels.

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CHAPTER XIII.

I experience the Passion of Love for the third time—My first Attempts in Poetry.

THOUGH in the eyes of others, as well as in my own, I had derived no advantage from my various travels, yet my ideas had certainly begun to expand, and my reasoning faculty to become stronger. Hence I did not receive very cordially my brother-in-law when he came to advise me to solicit some diplomatic employment. I told him I had seen enough of kings and their representatives; that it was impossible to esteem them; that I would not even represent the Great Mogul, and still less the King of Sardinia, one of the most petty European princes; that in my opinion, in a country governed like our's, an individual could

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only live on his fortune if he possessed one, or otherwise embrace some laudable occupation by which he could secure to himself a happy independence. This discourse somewhat lengthened the countenance of my brother-in-law, who was a lord of the bed-chamber. He never again spoke to me of any employment, and my ideas on this subject remained unchanged.

Behold me then, at twenty-three years of age, in possession of an ample fortune for a native of Piedmont, enjoying as much liberty as it was possible to do, having acquired a knowledge, though imperfectly, of the moral and political world, by seeing different men and different countries; as much of a philosopher as was compatible with my years, and equally proud as ignorant. Hence it is easy to foresee that I had not yet run through the whole scale of errors, and that I had still many faults to commit before my impetuous, proud, and intolerant character, would submit to the controul of reason.

Toward the end of 1773, I took a splendid house in the Piazza di S. Carlo, at

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Turin. I furnished it with taste and luxury, but with some degree of singularity; and I began to lead a most agreeable and pleasant life, amid those friends who flocked round me in crowds. I again renewed my intimacy with my former young and foolish academic companions, among whom were ten or twelve whose characters more nearly assimilated with my own.

We established a permanent society, for which regulations were drawn up, tests prescribed, and various other mummeries similar to the craft of masonry. Those who offered themselves as candidates were either rejected or admitted by a majority of voices. The only object of our society, which met several times a week, was to amuse ourselves by supping together, and reasoning, or rather talking nonsense on every subject which occurred.

These solemn sittings were most frequently held at my house, because it was handsomer and more spacious than those of my comrades, and because as I was a bachelor and lived alone, we could enjoy greater freedom. Among these youths, who were de-

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scended from the first families in the city, some were rich, others poor; many of them had only moderate abilities, while others evinced the most consummate talents; many possessed little humour, while others displayed the most brilliant wit; even several of them had received the very best education. Hence it is evident that I could claim no superiority over these my youthful companions, though I had seen more of the world than the whole of them put together; nor do I believe I would have been so inclined, had I even been intitled to do so. The laws that we established were discussed, not dictated; they were just and impartial. We had a throne erected, through an opening in which essays and papers of various kinds were deposited; the key was intrusted to the president, who was chosen every week, and whose duty it was to read all these productions. Some of them were extremely amusing, and not wholly destitute of humour. They were all anonymous, though we frequently conjectured the name of the author. It was a common misfortune, but particularly so to me, that all these writings abound-

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ed in French idioms. For my part I threw several into the throne, which occasioned great mirth in the assembly. They were generally on humorous subjects, interlarded with philosophy and numerous absurdities, and written in a style, which if not barbarous, was at least far from being perfect, but which passed with an auditory as little versed in the beauties of composition as myself. I recollect a fragment which I still preserve, descriptive of a scene in the *last judgment*. In it, God is represented as demanding of the souls assembled before his judgment-seat an account of all their different actions, and several personages are introduced, who depict their own character. This trifle was received with great applause; they discovered in it much justness and strength of colouring, and named on the spot several of those alluded to in the different portraits.

This little essay convinced me that I could communicate my ideas in writing, so as to produce some effect on others, and inspired me with the desire and a faint hope of producing some work which might secure to

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me literary immortality. Nothing however could be more vague than these ideas, since my total ignorance prevented me from putting such a design into execution. I possessed a kind of natural instinct for satire, and evinced great facility in holding up persons and things to ridicule. Notwithstanding my disposition to this species of writing, I contemned it at the bottom of my heart, being convinced that the short-lived success of such productions is rather imputable to malignity and envy, which always rejoice when others are attacked, than to the intrinsic merit of the satire itself.

The absolute liberty I enjoyed, continual dissipation, women, my youth, my horses, which at this period amounted to twelve; all these obstacles, insurmountable to a much stronger mind than that which I possessed, completely extinguished every spark of literary ambition. I lived in a state of the most deplorable idleness, without having a moment to myself, or ever opening a book. It is not then wonderful that I again fell under the dominion of love, whose yoke was now much more disgraceful than for-

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merly; and from which I only escaped by a violent fit of study with which I was fortunately seized, and which never afterwards leaving me, preserved me from weariness, anxiety, and I may add even despair. I am certain had I not stored my mind with useful knowledge before attaining my thirtieth year, I should either have become insane or committed suicide.

This third accession of love, though short, was truly extravagant. The new object of my attachment was a female of distinguished birth, but of doubtful reputation even in the world of gallantry; she was older than I by nine or ten years. I first became acquainted with her on my entrance into life, during the period I remained in the academy; and I now lodged exactly opposite her house. The advances she made to me, my idleness, and the state of my feelings, which perhaps resembled those of which Petrarch said with so much truth:

Se di che poco cenupe si allaccia
Un'anima gentil, quand'ella é sola,
E non é chi per lei difesa faccia,

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In short, Apollo, who inclined to lead me into the road of wisdom by this extraordinary route, all conspired, though I at first neither esteemed nor loved her, notwithstanding she was not destitute of beauty, to make me believe like a fool in the sincerity of that ardent attachment she professed for me, and I at length really loved her even to madness. Friends, amusements, even my favourite horses, were neglected. From eight in the morning till midnight, I remained continually by her side, discontented with my conduct, yet unable to leave her. In this wretched and vacillating state did I live, or more properly speaking, vegetate, from the middle of 1773 till February, 1775, without reflecting on the consequences of this adventure, the termination of which proved at once so distressing and fortunate to me.

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CHAPTER XIV.

Malady and Cure.

DURING the long continuance of this intrigue, I was kept in a state of constant agitation from morning till evening, which contributed greatly to impair my health. Towards the end of the year 1773, I was attacked by a severe malady, of so extraordinary a nature, that I jocularly observed to the wits, of whom there are not a few at Turin, that it seemed expressly made for me. It was ushered in by an almost incessant vomiting for thirty-six hours, and when my stomach had nothing more to reject, I was seized with so violent a hickup that I could not even swallow a single drop of water. The physicians, dreading an inflammation, ordered me to be

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bled in the foot; thereupon the efforts to vomit immediately ceased, but were succeeded by spasms so extremely violent, that I sometimes struck my head against the bolster of my bed, and at other times my feet and elbows against every thing that came in my way. I could neither take drink nor food of any kind; whenever a cup or any thing else was offered to me, such was the violence of the spasms, that it was dashed from the hand which presented it.

These attacks became still more severe. If any one attempted to hold me by mere force, though worn down by sickness, and emaciated by nearly four days' fasting; yet my muscles exerted energies of which they would have been wholly incapable in a state of health. I passed in this manner five whole days, during which I swallowed only twenty or thirty drops of water from the palm of the hand, and which I immediately rejected. At length, on the sixth day of my illness, I was put into a warm bath, composed of equal parts of oil and water. Here I was kept for six

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hours, after which my spasmodic paroxysms became much less severe. I was enjoined to persevere in the use of the same baths; and once deglutition was so far restored that I took a large draught of whey, and in a few days the complaint wholly disappeared. My long continued abstinence, and the violence of the retching, had been such as to produce a hollow between the two small bones composing the breast, of a demension sufficient to admit a middle sized egg being placed therein, and which has never since been obliterated.

This singular malady was the mere effect of the anguish, shame, and rage which constantly preyed on my mind, when I reflected on my licentious and disgraceful mode of life. As I saw no means of escaping these soul-harrowing reflections, I often invoked death to come to my aid. On the fifth day of my illness, when I was in the greatest danger one of my friends, a very worthy man, and somewhat older than myself, paid me a visit, in order to induce me to confess, and make my will. Before he uttered a word on the subject, I readily

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divined from his manner and appearance the reason of his visit. I immediately anticipated him, and without being in the least ruffled, gave orders that a priest and notary should be sent for.

During my youth, when twice or thrice threatened with death, I never felt myself appalled; I know not whether I shall act with equal fortitude when the hour of my dissolution approaches. In fact, no man's character can be fairly appreciated till after death.

My health being re-established, I unfortunately resumed the fetters of love, but I had at least the courage to cast off those which my being in a military capacity imposed on me. The trade of arms and the life of a soldier were never conformable to my character; but I relished them still less in a country where liberty and freedom are altogether unknown. I waited upon the colonel, and under the plea of bad health, requested leave to quit the service, to the duty of which I had in reality never been subjected. Of the eight years during which I wore the uniform, I spent five in foreign

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countries; and during the three others, I had been merely present at four reviews, two of which were only performed yearly in the provincial militia regiments in which I served. The colonel advised me to reflect seriously on this step, before he should notify my resignation to the court.

Though firmly fixed in my determination, I yet out of mere politeness replied that I acquiesced in his opinion, and would take a week or two longer to re-consider the subject. At the expiration of this time, I again sent in my resignation, which was accepted.

Thus I dragged on a weary existence, ashamed of myself, and shunning the society of all my acquaintances and friends. To my vivid imagination it appeared that my opprobrium was depicted in their countenances. During January, 1774, my mistress fell sick. However I might conjecture, I could never certainly discover the cause of her malady. As it was necessary she should be kept in profound quiet, I had a chair placed near the bed that I might be to watch over her. In it I remained

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the whole day, never uttering a syllable, lest I might subject her to the necessity of speaking. During one of these *sittings*, when oppressed with languor, a few sheets of paper fell accidentally into my hands, in which I began to scribble at random, and without any determinate plan, the scene of a piece which I know not whether to consider as belonging to tragedy or comedy. It was written in the form of a dialogue between a man whom I denominated Photin, a woman and a Cleopatra, who enters some time after the other interlocutors. I bestowed on the other female the appellation of Lachesis, without recollecting that it was the name given by the ancients to one of the fates.

When I now reflect on this attempt, it appears to me so much the more extraordinary, as for five or six years I had not only never written a single line of Italian, but never even opened a book of any kind, except very rarely, and that at long intervals. Thus, I cannot say how, or why, I was impelled to write these scenes in *Italian*,

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and in *verse*. When I began to sketch this piece I had no other reason to prefer the name of Cleopatra to that of Berenice, Zenobia, or of any other heroic queen, except it was from being in the constant habit of viewing the superb tapestries in the anti-chamber of my mistress, on which was represented the history of Mark Anthony and Cleopatra.

On the recovery of my mistress, forgetful of the ridiculous scenes I had written, I placed them under the cushion of her couch, where they remained a whole year without any one suspecting it.

Disgusted, and even irritated at myself for the inglorious life which I led, I took in the month of May, 1774, the sudden resolution of visiting Rome, in order to try if travelling and absence might not cure me of my passion. I therefore availed myself of one of those violent disputes which very frequently occurred between me and my mistress, and without saying a word respecting my intention, returned home in the evening, and immediately began to make

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the necessary preparation for my journey, and on the morning of the second day set out for Milan.

I did not visit her during this interval, but having probably learned my design from some of my domestics, she returned me my letters and portrait, as is customary on similar occasions, on the evening previous to my departure. Though this occurrence produced some agitation in my mind, and made me waver in my resolution, I nevertheless assumed sufficient courage to set out on my journey. Incessantly haunted by this truly pitiable passion, I had scarcely reached Novara, when cowardice, sorrow, and regret, triumphing over reason, again took possession of my mind, and overturned my purpose. I sent forward my carriage and servants to Milan, requesting the French Abbé, whom I had taken as a travelling companion, to wait for me in that city, where I would re-join him. Taking a postillion for my guide, I set out about midnight on my return, and reached Turin at day-break. Not daring to enter the city, lest I should render myself the laughing-

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stock of all my acquaintances, I stopped at a wretched inn in the suburbs, and from thence wrote a very penitential letter to my mistress, humbly craving that she would grant my pardon, and vouchsafe me an audience. I waited not long for her answer. My faithful Elias, who never failed on any occasion to palliate my faults, and who had been left behind to superintend my concerns at Turin during my absence, brought me this answer. My mistress having acquiesced in the prayer of my petition, I entered the city by night, disguised like a vagabond, and obtained my ignominious pardon. Before again setting out for Milan, which I did at an early hour in the morning, it was agreed between us that I should return to Turin, in five or six weeks, under pretence of ill health. Alternately rational and imbecile, I had scarcely set out, on peace being sealed, than I felt ashamed of my unsteady and wavering conduct. I thus reached Milan, tormented by the most poignant regrets, and in a state of mind calculated equally to excite pity and contempt. I knew not then what experience

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has since taught me, the truth of the following sentiment of the divine Petrarch:

Che chi discerne é vinto du chi vuole.

I remained only two days at Milan, during which I was solely occupied in musing whether I ought to shorten my inauspicious journey, or whether I might not contrive to prolong it without failing in the promise I had given to my mistress.

Insupportable as were my chains, I had neither the will nor power to break them asunder. Finding solace only in travelling, and continual dissipation, I passed rapidly through Modena and Bologna, and repaired to Florence. I remained only two days in this latter city, and again set out for Pisa and Leghorn, where I received letters from my mistress. Unable any longer to suffer the torments of absence, I took the road by Lerici. Leaving Genoa, the Abbé, and my carriage which stood in need of repairs, I travelled post, and reached Turin eighteen days after setting out on a journey which was to occupy one year. I entered the city as before by night, in order to avoid the jests of my companions—thus terminated

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this ridiculous excursion, which cost me many a bitter tear.

Under the ægis not of my conscience, which stung me to the quick, but of my solemn and inanimate countenance, I escaped the sarcasms of my friends and acquaintances, who ventured not to approach me with congratulations on my return. In fact, this return was extremely unfortunate for me; because, contemptible in my own eyes, I fell into such a state of melancholy as would, if long continued, inevitably have led to insanity or death.

I continued to wear my disgraceful fetters till toward the end of January, 1775, when my rage, which had hitherto so often been restrained within bounds, broke forth with the greatest violence.

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CHAPTER XV.

I recover my Freedom—First Sonnet.

On returning one evening from the Opera, the most insipid and tiresome amusement in Italy, where I had passed several hours in the box of my mistress, who was by turns the object of my antipathy and my love, I took the firm determination of emancipating myself for ever from her yoke. Experience had taught me that flight so far from enabling me to persevere in my resolutions, tended on the contrary to weaken, and even to destroy them; I was inclined therefore to subject myself to a still more severe trial, imagining from the obstinacy and peculiarity of my character, that I should succeed most certainly by the adoption of such measures as would compel me to make the

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greatest efforts. I determined never to leave the house, which, as I have already said, was exactly opposite that of my mistress; to gaze at her windows, to see her go in and out every day, to listen to the sound of her voice, though firmly resolved that no advances on her part either direct or indirect, no tender remembrances, nor in short any other means which might be employed, should ever again tempt me to a renewal of our intercourse. I was determined to die or liberate myself from my disgraceful thraldom. In order to give stability to my purpose, and to render it impossible for me to waver without the imputation of dishonour, I communicated my determination to one of my friends, who was greatly attached to me, and whom I highly esteemed. He had lamented the state of mind into which I had fallen, but not wishing to give countenance to my conduct, and seeing the impossibility of inducing me to abandon it, he had for some time ceased to visit at my house. In the few lines which I addressed to him, I briefly stated the resolution I had adopted, and as a pledge of my constancy

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I sent him a long tress of my ugly red hair. I had purposely caused it to be cut off in order to prevent my going out, as no one but clowns and sailors appeared in public with short hair. I concluded my billet by conjuring him to strengthen and aid my fortitude by his presence and example. Isolated, in this manner, in my own house, I prohibited all species of intercourse, and passed the first fifteen days in uttering the most frightful lamentations and groans. Some of my friends came to visit me, and appeared to commiserate my situation, perhaps because I did not myself complain; but my figure and whole appearance bespoke my sufferings. Wishing to read something, I had recourse to the Gazettes, whole pages of which I frequently ran over without understanding a single word. I rode out on horseback in the most solitary places, and it was the only exercise which proved salutary either to my mind or body. I passed more than two months till the end of March, 1775, in a state almost bordering on frenzy. About this period a new idea darted into my mind, which tended to as-

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suage my melancholy. Reflecting one day on the amusement I might derive from poetry, I succeeded with the greatest difficulty, and at different times, in composing fourteen verses, which I denominated a sonnet, and which I was anxious to send to the amiable Father Paciaudi. He sometimes visited at my house, and had always shewn the greatest kindness towards me, without however dissembling his sorrow at seeing me wasting my time in a state of total inactivity. This worthy man had incessantly exhorted me to undertake a course of Italian reading. He had one day picked up at an old book-stall the Cleopatra of Cardinal Delfino, which he called sublime, and recollecting to have heard me say that it was a tragic subject, and one that I should like to attempt; though I had never shewn him my first essay, of which I have spoken above, he presented it to me. In one of my lucid intervals, I had the patience to peruse the whole of this piece, and write marginal notes on it. I returned it, fully persuaded that in respect to the plot, and the management of the passions, it was much inferior to

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mine, if I had finished it according to my original plan. Not to discourage me, Father Paciaudi imputed merit to my sonnet it did not possess; but some months afterwards, on becoming acquainted with our best poets, I learned to estimate this piece at its real value, which amounted to—*nothing*. I was greatly indebted, however, to the undeserving praises of the good father, which were bestowed with so much benevolence, since they encouraged me to persevere till I became more worthy of them.

Several days before my rupture with my mistress, I had drawn my piece from under the pillow of her sofa, where it had lain for a whole year. It happened that in one of these hours of solitude and constant irritation, I cast my eyes upon it. Astonished at the resemblance between the state of my heart and Anthony's, I said to myself: this piece must be finished: it must be retouched; it cannot remain as it is: the passion which consumes me must be depicted; and it may be performed by the comedians who annually visit this place during spring.

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No sooner had this idea passed through my mind, than forgetting my mistress, I began to scribble, to alter, to read, and re-alter, and in short to become a fool, in another manner, for this unfortunate Cleopatra, born under such unhappy auspices. I was not ashamed to consult some of my friends, who had not like myself neglected to cultivate the Italian language, and Italian poetry. I wearied all those who could give me any advice, or throw any light upon an art to which I was so great a stranger. In this manner, wishing for nothing but to learn and make some progress in such a bold and hazardous career, my house became gradually changed into a species of academy. On acquiring a wish for knowledge, circumstances had conspired to render me docile; but my natural obstinacy returning, I became less attentive to the instructions which were given me. I wearied myself and others without deriving the smallest advantage from them. The only good that occurred to me from this new whim was, that of gradually detaching me from love, and of awakening my reason, which had so long

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lain dormant. I no longer found it necessary to cause myself to be tied with cords to a chair, in order to prevent me from leaving my house and returning to that of my mistress. This was one of the expedients I devised to render myself wise by force. The cords were concealed under a large mantle, in which I was enveloped, and only one hand remained at liberty.

Of all those who came to see me, not one suspected I was bound down in this manner. I remained in this situation for whole hours; Elias, who was my jailor, was alone intrusted with the secret. He always liberated me, as he had been enjoined, whenever the paroxysms of my rage subsided. Of all the whimsical methods, however, which I employed, the most curious was that of appearing in masquerade at the theatre towards the end of the carnival. Habited as Apollo, I ventured to present myself with a lyre, on which I played as well as I was able, and sung some bad verses of my own composing. Such effrontery was diametrically opposite to my

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natural character. The only excuse I can offer for similar scenes was my inability to resist an imperious passion. I felt that it was necessary to place an insuperable barrier between my mistress and me; and I saw that the strongest of all was the shame to which I should expose myself by renewing an attachment which I had so publicly turned into ridicule. Thus the dread of this shame prevented me from perceiving that I was already overwhelmed with it in public. Nevertheless, I felt myself gradually animated by a passion hitherto wholly unknown to me, the love of glory.

In short, after several months constant poetical consultations; after having ransacked grammars and dictionaries; after having strung together a great deal of nonsense, I collected five pieces, which I termed acts, and entitled the whole a tragedy. As soon as the first act was ready, instead of throwing it into the fire, I sent it to the polite Father Paciaudi, requesting him to examine it, and give me his opinion

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in writing. The notes which he made on these verses were really amusing; and I laughed at them in good earnest, though at my own expence; and among others, at the following (verse 184) "*The barking of the heart.*" This metaphor, he observes, reminds one of a dog; I intreat you to expunge it. The notes which he made on the first act, and the advice which he gave me in the letter which he sent on returning it, induced me to digest it anew with the most indefatigable patience. From this labour sprung the tragedy of Cleopatra, which was represented at Turin the 16th of June, 1775.

I not only teazed poor Father Paciaudi for his opinion of this second piece, but several others, and particularly Count Augustin Tana, who was nearly of my own age, and who during my stay at the academy was one of the king's pages. We had received the same education; but on leaving his place, he had constantly cultivated French and Italian literature; and had formed his taste, especially in criticism and philosophy, without attaching

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himself too much to the study of grammar. The intelligence, wit, and ingenuity of his observations upon this ill-fated Cleopatra would have made the reader laugh, if I had possessed the courage to display them; but they might have done me much evil, and besides could not have been wholly understood, since I have only copied a fortieth part of this first attempt. I also composed a small piece in prose, to be performed after Cleopatra, and which I entitled "*The Poets.*" Nevertheless, neither the small piece nor the tragedy, with all their defects, were the offspring of a fool; some marks of genius were discoverable in both.

In the Poets, I depicted myself under the name of Zeuzippe, and in this assumed character first satyrized my Cleopatra; I invoked her shade, in order that she might, in company with the other tragic heroines, decide on the merits of my piece, which was equally bad as that of my rival poets. The sole difference, which existed between their pieces and mine, was that the former

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were the productions of *learned incapacity*, whereas mine was the premature offspring of ignorance, which promised one day to become something.

These two pieces were represented two successive nights; but repenting that I had so rashly appeared before the public, though it was very indulgent, I used every effort with the managers to prevent them being again represented. From that eventful night, a devouring fire took possession of my soul; I thirsted one day to become a deserving candidate for theatrical fame; the passion of love never inspired me with such lively transports. Such was the manner in which I first appeared before the public. If my numerous dramatic works are not found to be superior to those two first productions of my pen, this ascent to Parnassus in the sock and buskin must doubtless be considered as a piece of folly highly extravagant and ridiculous; but if, on the contrary, I am deemed worthy to rank among our celebrated tragic or comic authors, this first step must be

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regarded as the most important of my whole life.

I shall here terminate the epoch of my youth. My manhood could not commence under happier auspices.

END OF VOL. I.

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